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Say it ain't snow

Overnight blizzard leaves Calgary in sea of white
metroNEWS

Family grieves tot's dayhome death

SILVERADO

No cause has yet been found

Lucie Edwardson
Metro | Calgary

The twin brother of a toddler who died suddenly at a Silverado dayhome last Thursday keeps asking for his sister, and his parents said they're "at a complete loss."

Police were called to the dayhome on the 100 block of Silverado Ridge Cres. SW Nov. 12, after receiving a report of a child in medical distress.

Ceira Lynn McGrath, an 18-month-old twin to Colby McGrath, was rushed to hospital where she died shortly after. The Calgary police homicide unit is now investigating.

Ceira's father, Ryan McGrath, took to social media to thank family and friends for their support, and express their deep sadness and confusion at the situation, which they believe was preventable.

A police spokesperson said the medical examiner hasn't determined a cause or manner of death, but said it's protocol for the homicide unit to investigate when a death is undetermined.

CPS said additional tests could take several months.

Elmarie Simons is the owner-operator of Elmy's Daycare, where Ceira and her brother Colby spent their days, and where Ceira initially entered into medical distress.

"It's the hardest thing in my life," said the childcare worker of 35 years. "I can't sleep, I'm using sleeping tablets and when I wake up I am haunted by the face of the sweet girl I loved."

Simons said leading up to calling 911, Ceira Lynn had been fussy, but said she wasn't a crier.

"I went to put her down for a nap … but she wouldn't go down, she was a little grumpy," she said. "I put her in a car seat to sleep, and she didn't cry or anything."

Ceira Lynn
CONTRIBUTED

She said she has texted with the family and said they told her they still loved her, but in a Facebook post, McGrath said he believes Ceira's death was preventable.

"How could it be, it's an accident, only God knows why it happened," said Simons. "Why would I ever hurt a child; it's sickening."

The family has invited anyone wishing to pay respects to a ceremony Nov. 21 at 2:30 pm at the Fish Creek funeral chapel at 14441 Bannister Rd. SE.

Simons said she thought about attending the funeral but doesn't want to upset the grieving family.

World awaits fate of Paris attacks mastermind

WORLD
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Hershey's remains only firm convicted in chocolate price-fixing case. **Business**

'Your actions have hurt ... this institution': Student

SCANDAL

U of C president confronted during town hall meeting

Helen Pike
Metro | Calgary

In a room of around 200 people, a first-year student stood in front of peers, faculty and administration to ask President Elizabeth Cannon if she would step down from her post.

"As a student I believe your actions have hurt the standing of this institution," said Frank Finley, first-year student in law and society. He explained actions surrounding the Enbridge scandal, a legal battle about MacEwan Hall and irresponsible spending have turned the school into an embarrassment. "I was wondering if you'd be willing to resign from your post as president immediately."

Frank Finley HELEN PIKE/METRO

The crowd laughed and erupted into applause when she politely declined.

The University's routine town hall to disseminate information and update the community on budgetary issues was interrupted by a pointed line of questioning Wednesday as students stood ready to voice concerns over the school's recently aired dirty laundry. This has been the first public forum for students to have their voices heard since the school has come under scrutiny for their relationship with Enbridge as well as legal battle with the Students' Union over MacHall.

A large concern from students currently lies with the University's ongoing legal battle with the Students' Union over MacHall ownership. The Students' Union believes if the hall is managed by the University after December 9, when the current Licence of Occupation Operation and Management Agreement (LOOMA) is set to expire.

Dru Marshall, U of C provost and vice president academic, said they don't plan on evicting the SU, and hope to keep operations smooth throughout discussions and legal disputes.

"Part of the revenues for MacHall right now go to operate the building. Obviously we will ensure the operation of the building still occurs, but the intent is not to interrupt student services," said Marshall. "If this occurs we'll have to demonstrate our words with actions."

Students attend a meeting Wednesday to voice concerns over the University of Calgary's recently aired dirty laundry. HELEN PIKE/METRO

Marshall said there's a series of plans underway at the moment to deal with what will happen when the LOOMA expires, but she can't discuss plans as they are in a legal dispute.

Students remain unconvinced by administrations reassurance.

"I'll be starting a petition on campus to ask Cannon and some of the other executives to step down from their posts," Finley said. "We're paying these people over $500,000 a year and I expect the best job for that money, and they've done anything but that."

He added that many students, like him, feel a loss of trust with administration.

Maria Cervera, a second-year biological sciences and education student, said the answers during the session were quite vague, especially in the case of the MacHall lawsuit.

"As students we don't know what's going to happen with the programs even through they've said they're committed to contributing to the student experience, there's no guarantee that's going to happen."

> **We're paying these people over $500K per year and I expect the best job for that money.**
> Student Frank Finley

SUSTAINABILITY

Expert chosen for Enbridge review

The University of Calgary has chosen an expert to conduct a third party review of the Centre for Corporate Sustainability — formerly known as the Enbridge Centre for Sustainability.

Retired Justice Terrence McMahon, Q.C. will review the centre from its creation to current operations after a CBC investigative report alleged Enbridge's ties to the school were compromising academic freedoms.

The committee, made up of board of governor members chaired by Mark Staratt, has set terms of reference for the review and also a due date — Dec. 14 of this year. They won't have any access to the collected documents or interviews conducted by McMahon in the review.

"I'm extremely pleased that the Honourable Terrence McMahon, Q.C. has agreed to conduct this review," said Starratt.

"Retired Justice McMahon is one of the most senior lawyers and mediators in Alberta. He was a respected Alberta justice for 20 years and had a long and distinguished professional career with the Calgary law firm of Atkinson McMahon. He was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1978 and, in 1992, a Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta. Since his retirement from the Court of Queen's Bench in 2012, McMahon has served as Senior Counsel at Field Law in Calgary, where he is a much sought-after and respected mediator and arbitrator."

HELEN PIKE/METRO

Making room for refugees

HOUSING

Landlords want to help Syrians find new home here

Brodie Thomas
Metro | Calgary

Calgary's landlords are stepping forward to say they're ready to accept Syrian refugees into their properties.

Mayor Naheed Nenshi mentioned that the city is meeting with some of the city's larger property owners during a phone in on CBC radio Wednesday afternoon.

When contacted, the mayor's office declined to elaborate on any meetings, as did Calgary Housing Company.

But Riaz Mamdani, the CEO of Calgary-based Strategic Group, confirmed he had spoken with the mayor's office as well as federal officials and made a commitment to help.

He said his company — which owns rental properties across Canada — is prepared to open its properties to Syrian refugees with no limits imposed.

"If that means we're not going to charge them for a period of time, that's our commitment to the overall cause," said Mamdani. He said his company doesn't have a budget in this undertaking.

"Our plan is to do what it takes," he said. "Our plan is to assess the need. The greater the need, the greater the resources — and we'll find the resources."

Mamdani is himself a refugee. His parents fled Uganda in 1973 when he was just a small child, and they settled in Calgary.

He went on to study pharmacy and law before finding his niche in real estate.

"My family are immigrants to Canada who came in a difficult time from a part of the world that was in chaos," he said.

"This is part of giving back to people 45 years later in a similar circumstance."

> **If that means we're not going to charge them for a period of time, that's our commitment.**
> Riaz Mamdani, CEO of Strategic Group

Another Calgary company — Boardwalk Rental Communities — said it was already planning to address the cause.

It is dedicating 350 of its rentals across Canada, including about 50 in Calgary, to Syrian refugees.

The director of community development, David McIlveen, said the company will be reducing rent by $150 at each of those properties for the first year.

"Its part of our DNA," said McIlveen.

"Social responsibility is one of core values as a company."

Strategic Group CEO Riaz Mamdani was a child refugee from Uganda in the 1970s and wants to give back. CONTRIBUTED

ROAD CONSTRUCTION

Caution: Snarls ahead

The city may have to set new capital works priorities in the southwest as the province works at building the Calgary ring road.

The city's standing committee on transportation and transit heard reports on the southwest and west sections of the ring road on Wednesday and debated on how to deal with traffic impacts.

"The west ring road has been delayed, and now we're looking at what the consequences are," said Coun. Richard Pootmans. "It's disappointing for us and it comes at some cost."

Pootmans said now it looks as if the province won't begin until the southwest section is almost complete.

His ward will see much of the influx of traffic from the southwest ring road as it is completed in 2021.

Talk at the meeting was about what to do with the already-busy interchange of Richmond Road and Sarcee Trail.

Pootmans believes an overpass for Sarcee Trail at Richmond road is necessary now, and another overpass at Bow Trail is a close second.

The committee moved the decision on those overpasses to the upcoming debate on the city's capital budget.

"We'll expect to have a healthy debate at council about which desirable projects are on the list and eventually ranked for funding," he said.

BRODIE THOMAS/METRO

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Mike Conroy, president of the Brenda Strafford Foundation, said a dementia-friendly approach will help patients stay in their communities longer, before having to move to a specialized facility. AARON CHATHA/METRO

Pilot targets dementia awareness

MENTAL HEALTH

Project will educate police, workers in Alberta towns

Aaron Chatha
Metro | Calgary

Okotoks and Calgary's Signal Hill are on track to become the first dementia-friendly communities in the province.

The Brenda Strafford Foundation is working on a pilot program that will train community agencies, police and employees at banks and grocery stores to identify dementia patients and give them the support they need.

"It's the ability to recognize that maybe someone is disoriented or forgetful, so they don't think it's something else at play — that it could be dementia, so they know how to respond to them," said foundation president Mike Conroy.

Conroy said dementia is a disease that progressively gets worse, and people might not even realize they're suffering from it at first. Families become informal caregivers, and having a community in place that recognizes little things would help minimize that burden.

"They could wander off, they could forget they have a vehicle in the parking lot or forget where they came from," said Conroy. "There's all sorts of potential risks, and people with better information and better education, who know who to contact, they can provide a level of safety and support that otherwise wouldn't be there."

According to the Alzheimer's Society of Canada, almost 750,000 Canadians suffered from the disease in 2011. That number could reach 1.4 million in the next 15 years.

1.4M

The Alzheimer's Society of Canada says 1.4 million Canadians may suffer from dementia by 2030.

For Conroy, he said the program will allow people with dementia to stay in their communities longer, before they reach a stage that requires they stay in a facility.

The project hopes to launch by February 2016, but the group has already begun reaching out to Signal Hill community associations and the Okotoks town council.

AHS

Airdrie mayor 'furious' over director contract

Jeremy Simes
For Metro | Calgary

The mayor of Airdrie is slamming Alberta Health Services for its lack of public consultation after it decided not to renew the contract of an area medical director.

The health authority's recent decision to not renew the contract of Dr. Julian Kyne, the medical director at Airdrie's Urgent Care Centre, has Airdrie Mayor Peter Brown up in arms.

"AHS has a tendency to make decisions without consulting the community," Brown said. "(AHS) needs to reconsider (its) decision, and talk to the people who live here."

The health authority declined to respond to Metro when asked if it felt it adequately consults communities.

Instead, AHS provided a statement on behalf of Dr. Ted Braun, acting associate medical director for the Calgary Zone.

"We are committed to strong urgent and primary care service to support patients and families in Airdrie and surrounding communities," Braun said.

Kyne — whose contract ends Nov. 30 — has directed the Urgent Care Centre for eight years and is a member of the Airdrie Health Foundation (AHF), an advocacy group that's been aiming to construct a new health campus for the city.

Both Brown and Kyne work together on the AHF.

Brown said he thinks AHS won't extend Kyne's contract due to Kyne's advocacy for better health facilities in Airdrie, as he says the Urgent Care Centre is mostly "ineffective" for reducing health costs.

Braun said Kyne's departure is between the employer and contractor.

"As such, AHS will not speak to the circumstances of the medical director's departure," he said.

Kyne declined to comment regarding the issue.

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Plans to up cash for films applauded

FUNDING

Province to invest $37M in the industry

Jeremy Simes
For Metro | Calgary

Culture and Tourism Minister David Eggen thinks the government's plans to up funding for the film and television industry will be well heard by those in the industry across Canada and North America.

"People are looking to what we're building here," he said Wednesday, after touring the Heartland set in Calgary. "So we want to be wide open for business."

The Government of Alberta will invest about $37 million in the film and television industry, an increase of $11 million from previous budgets.

Eggen said the investment is part of diversifying the province's economy, given the difficult economic times.

"This investment will allow us to continue to grow Alberta's production industry, support home grown productions, and enhance the appeal of our province as a destination for international filmmakers," he said.

For every $1 invested, there will be a $6 return from the film industry, he added.

Damian Petti, president of the international alliance of theatrical stage employees Local 212, said he's seen significant job growth for Alberta's artists in the industry.

"We are very encouraged by the fact that Alberta's NDP government has identified our industry as a sensible place to grow and diversify the economy," he said.

Tim Cox, managing director of SEVEN24 Films, greets Culture and Tourism Minister David Eggen. JEREMY SIMES/FOR METRO

VOLUNTEERING

Muslim neighbours going the extra mile

Helen Pike
Metro | Calgary

It's snowy, it's cold and on your way home you're dreading having to slave over a walkway or sidewalk before retreating into your comfy abode. But to your surprise when you get home all you find is a neatly plowed walk with a note.

This walk was cleared by your Muslim neighbour.

"We have to go the extra mile and do 110 per cent job to put people back to neutral," Zeyad Elgamal said. "This can speak more than words."

It's a small community favour Elgamal hopes will catch on and combat negative stereotypes — and Islamophobia — as perpetuated by bad press.

The idea came to Elgamal who said he was inspired by the City of Calgary's Snow Angels, a city program to help out those who can't clear snow themselves. Last Thursday, he put his plan into motion and started a Facebook group for the initiative.

"This is one of the issues that bothers most Canadians," Elgamal said. "The idea came to me when I was thinking about how we can help to combat Islamophobia … why don't we as Muslims in the local community get labelled as helpers … this can be good publicity for Muslims.

He's already rounded up a number volunteers who are gearing up for the first snow — even purchasing snow-clearing equipment for the initiative.

Elgamal hopes this initiative will grow to include a number of volunteers in each of Calgary's neighbourhoods ready to lend a hand at the first sight of the white stuff.

And if all goes well, he said he can see the project going forward in other seasons.

Zeyad Elgamal. JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

CLIMATE CHANGE

Greg Clark proposes carbon tax on consumers

As the Alberta government discusses the need to address climate change, the Alberta Party is proposing it take a different course and tax consumers for carbon usage and not only industry.

Greg Clark, the Alberta Party's lone member in the legislature, is the first to suggest everyday Albertans pay a tax for consumption of the driver of climate change, in a raft of policy suggestions he released Wednesday.

Alberta currently levies carbon from industrial emitters at $15 per tonne, though the NDP has increased that levy to $20 per tonne, effective Jan. 1, 2016 (and has proposed to increase it to $30 per tonne in 2017).

Clark said his proposed consumer carbon tax, at $10 a tonne, would be revenue neutral for Albertans as it would include offsets to income and corporate taxes to make up the difference. RYAN TUMILTY/METRO

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1
Fire truck hit.

258
Collisions.

26
Injuries caused by collisions.

3,000
Minimum estimated people whose homes lost power.

Calgarians took on brisk weather and icy streets on Wednesday, after an overnight snowfall left the city in a blanket of white.
JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

Heavy weather keeps emergency services busy

WINTRY CONDITIONS

More than 30 car crashes in first 12 hours

Lucie Edwardson
Metro | Calgary

As snow fell and ice coated Calgary, collision numbers in the city were on the rise, Wednesday.

According to a Calgary police spokesperson, there were 258 collisions in the 24 hours that proceeded the snowfall, resulting in 26 injuries.

With a fresh layer of snow and ice on Calgary streets, the city's emergency medical services are reminding motorists and pedestrians to be cautious.

According to a release sent out by EMS, paramedics responded to around 30 motor vehicle collisions in Calgary and surrounding area over 12 hours.

Although none of the crashes resulted in life-threatening injury or death, numerous people were transported to hospital.

Carol Henke, spokeswoman for the Calgary Fire Department, said they are urging people to drive with care, and be aware of emergency responders out on the road.

"Where some people get in to trouble is where they apply the brakes improperly," she said. "We actually had someone rear-end a fire truck this morning. Minor damage and no injuries, which is good, but with emergency vehicles working on the road people need to slow down and drive to the conditions."

According to Enmax's website, between 10 p.m. and 10:35 p.m., multiple areas in the city experienced power outages.

Outages occurred in New Brighton, Mckenzie Town, East Shepard Industrial and Copperfield, affecting about 2,740 customers, and an estimated 636 customers experienced outages in McCall and Greenview Industrial park.

As of 5:30 Wednesday, Enmax had no reported outages.

EMS offered Calgarians a few tips on how to navigate the newly slick conditions, including advising motorist to leave sufficient time and space between vehicles and to leave ample amount of time to get to a destination.

They also encourage drivers to winterize their vehicles by making sure tires have appropriate tread and fluids are topped up, including window-washer fluid.

> **"Where some people get in to trouble is where they apply the brakes improperly.**
> Carol Henke, Calgary Fire Department

DINING

Craft Beer Market to open second Calgary location

Jeremy Simes
For Metro | Calgary

Craft Beer Market's owner PJ L'Heureux is confident the economy will improve in the near future, so he's set to open a second location in the city.

"Everyone's uneasy with the market currently," he said. "But we have to look at the future market. I think it's going to come around, and we can't sit on our heels."

Come summer 2016, Craft will open on the south-side of the Southcentre Mall, located between Crate & Barrel and Restoration Hardware.

"Southcentre has done a great job of building an impressive line-up of brands and we are excited to be a part of that offering to people living in the south," he said.

The new location will feature a rooftop patio and high ceilings, he said, adding the restaurant will have a warm vibe.

L'Heureaux said Craft spent two years looking for the perfect location, adding the company considered both far north and the south.

Craft chose the south because it could serve more in the city, he said.

The chain opened its first location in the beltline in 2011 and, since then, has opened shop in Edmonton and Vancouver, and soon Ottawa.

"The opening of Craft Beer Market will enhance Southcentre's dining and entertainment offering," said Shawn Hanson, general manager of Southcentre.

JEREMY SIMES/METRO

A render of the second Craft Beer Market that's to open in Southcentre Mall by summer 2016. CONTRIBUTED

EDUCATION

Schools getting ready for refugees

Aaron Chatha
Metro | Calgary

The Alberta government is telling school boards across the province to prepare for a large number of refugee students who will be entering the system.

The federal government expects 25,000 refugees by the end of the year. Alberta's premier expects the province to take up to 3,000 of those.

In a memo obtained by Metro, Education Minister David Eggen asked school boards to make preparations to ensure the education system would be "welcoming compassionate and quick to address the of our newest Albertans."

"We have made preparations to accommodate a larger than usual number of refugee students," said Karen Ryhorchuk, media relations officer for the Calgary Catholic School District. "We do have supports in place to be able to help those students who we receive."

Both Calgary Catholic and the Calgary Board of Education have reception centres to support refugee families registering their children in school. The registration centres help place students in schools based on their needs, language abilities and room within the system.

Calgary Catholic said it does not currently have numbers for class sizes. The CBE has previously said its schools are at an 86 per cent utilization rate across the board, with more than a third more than 90 per cent full.

Megan Geyer, CBE media relations officer, said new students are typically placed in schools with lower utilization rates that best fit their needs.

"The CBE has representation on a city-wide committee looking at the issues around the Syrian refugees," she said. "As well, we are working internally to ensure that we as a school system are as fully prepared as we can be."

In the 2015 provincial budget, $419 million was allocated to Inclusive Education, which provides $5,200 per refugee student. It was an $11-million increase over last year.

Also included from Inclusive Education is $86 million toward English Language Learners. The ELL budget has seen reductions since the 2011–12 budget, including a 3.1 per cent reduction in grants in the March provincial budget this year. That funding was not restored in the NDP October budget.

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ARTS

'Legend Has It' offers up improvised fairy tale

Jeremy Simes
For Metro | Calgary

Being a starving artist never really appealed to Rebecca Northan, who admits she doesn't mind the so-called "commercial" side of art, where money is to be made.

"You get more bums in seats if you have an amazing poster image, or a great title or a good hook," she said. "I want to sell a good time."

Northan's recent co-creation, Legend Has It — an act where the cast improvises, so each show is different — will be featured via Alberta Theatre Projects at the Martha Cohen Theatre on Nov. 24.

The cast. Back from left, Jamie Northan, Ellis Lalonde, Josh Bertwistle and Christy Bruce. Front, Bruce Horak, Renée Amber and Rebecca Northan. JEREMY SIMES/FOR METRO

The story takes place in the world of Jaro, plagued by the evil Haldor. However, an ancient scroll foretells the arrival of a hero who has the power to defeat him.

As it turns out, the hero is you, and you get to choose the villain. But you can also just watch, if you'd rather not participate.

The show was originally workshopped with Calgary's Loose Moose Theatre company, and will be heading to New York in January after the show ends with ATP.

Though New York is nice, it's not the icing on the cake for improviser Christy Bruce.

"Performing with ATP has been a dream come true," she said. "Ever since I was a 10, I've always wanted to be on stage here. And New York is an added bonus."

"But don't tell New York that," Northan added with a laugh.

In fact, it's too soon to think about New York for improviser Jamie Northan.

"Like an athlete, you have to take it one game at a time," he said. "I'm interested to see how it goes (in New York), but I'm just thinking about the next show."

Legend Has It is for those aged 6 and older, and tickets can be found online by visiting hatplive.com/whats-on/legend-has-it/.

TRAVEL

High school's trip to Paris cancelled

Andrea Ross
Metro | Edmonton

The Edmonton Public School Board has cancelled a trip to Paris for four high school students, who planned to present papers at a youth climate-change conference next week.

The 11th annual Conference of Youth runs from Nov. 26 to 28 in Paris, and was part of a week-long experience organized for the students and two teachers from Queen Elizabeth and Lillian Osbourne high schools.

The trip was cancelled because of the recent terrorist attacks, board spokesman Brad Stromberg said.

"With all decisions involving students, safety and security are paramount," he said.

"In this instance, several factors were considered, including the federal government's global travel advisory, which at the moment urges a high degree of caution for travel to that area.

"Of course, we know that the students are disappointed. An immense amount of time and effort has been invested in earning their invitation to attend."

Lillian Osborne Principal Janet Hancock said two grade 12 students from the school had been working on papers since the beginning of September to present at the conference.

The decision to cancel the trip wasn't influenced by the students' parents, she said.

The school is now exploring other ways of allowing the students show their work at the conference, including video conferencing.

All trip participants have been fully refunded, Hancock added.

"We totally understand why the trip has been cancelled," Hancock said. "Our students have tremendous empathy for what happened in Paris."

> **"With all decisions involving students, safety and security are paramount."**
> Brad Stromberg

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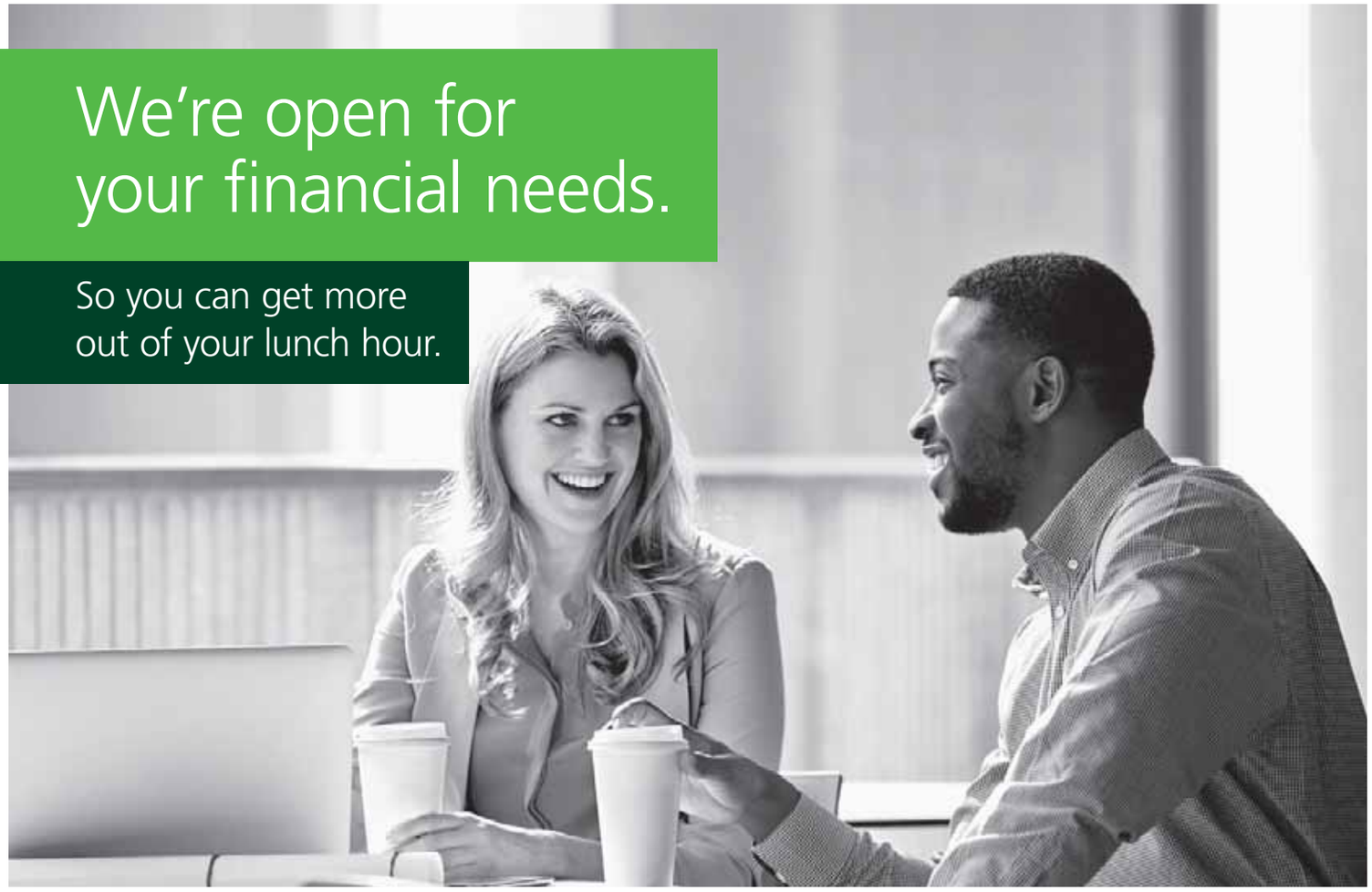

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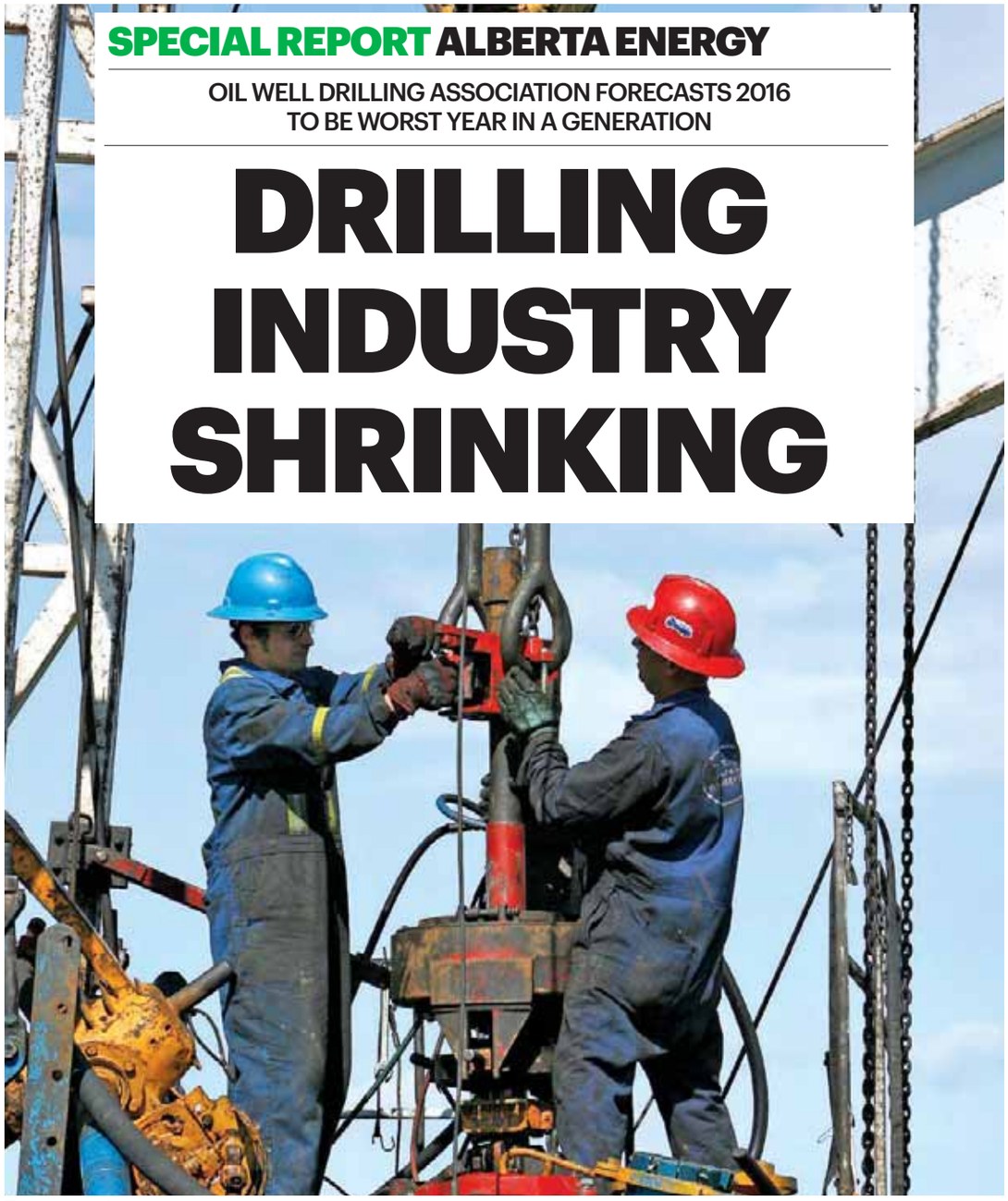
SPECIAL REPORT ALBERTA ENERGY

OIL WELL DRILLING ASSOCIATION FORECASTS 2016 TO BE WORST YEAR IN A GENERATION

DRILLING INDUSTRY SHRINKING



The country's oil well drilling association says that drilling levels may not ever return to recent levels as the industry continues to absorb the impact of low oil prices. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE PHOTO

Canada's oil well drilling industry will continue to shrink next year and may never bounce back to recent levels, the industry's main representative body said Wednesday.

"The drilling and service rig industry is facing one of the most difficult economic times in a generation," Mark Scholz, president of the Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors, said in presenting the association's 2016 forecast.

"The active rig count in Western Canada today is at the same level as we experienced in 1983, one of the worst periods in our industry's history."

The association is forecasting 56,260 operating days next year, a drop of 57 per cent compared with 2014 and 17 per cent compared with this year.

57%

The drop in operating days forecasted for next year when compared to 2014.

Fewer operating days mean fewer jobs, with direct and indirect jobs forecast to total just 21,465 next year, compared with 25,785 this year and 49,950 in 2014.

"It is difficult to quantify the challenges ahead, but there will be significant hardship on businesses, families and workers," Scholz said.

Brian Krausert, chair of the association's forecasting committee, said the year ahead looks grim as utilization rates are projected to be at 22 per cent, the lowest level since the association started tracking the statistic in 1977.

"What is different about this downcycle is the speed of the downturn and the projected length, and also the impact of what technology has done," said Krausert.

He said the industry has already lost 180 rigs from its peak in 2009 and that with continued improvements in rig technology and performance, the industry will emerge from this downturn smaller and more technology driven.

Advances in technology will mean more automation and efficiency, which will require fewer rigs and fewer people to operate them, said Krausert.

"It will be a year of transition for the entire drilling industry," he said. "We are on the cusp of massive change in the drilling industry."

The association expects 4,728 wells drilled next year, compared with 5,531 this year and 11,226 last year. At 22 per cent, the utilization rate will be down from 25 per cent this year and 46 per cent in 2014.

The drilling industry has been hit hard as oil and gas producers have pulled back on exploration and development plans in the wake of lower oil prices.

Scholz also said new government policies aren't helping the industry in these difficult times.

"An increase in taxes and an uncertain competitive landscape with respect to royalties, and new environmental taxes have left a big question mark on the attractiveness of operating in Alberta," Scholz said.

"The cumulative impacts of fiscal policy changes implemented, or contemplated, by the Alberta government could drive away investment and jobs for a very long time."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

"An increase in taxes and an uncertain competitive landscape with respect to royalties, and new environmental taxes have left a big question mark on the attractiveness of operating in Alberta. Mark Scholz

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Reviews on two major Alberta pipelines, including the Energy East Pipeline, will continue even with changes ongoing at the National Energy Board. CANADIAN PRESS FILE PHOTO

No pipeline slowdown

POLICY

New minister Carr content for reviews to move forward

The ongoing reviews of two major pipeline proposals will move forward even as Ottawa works to bolster the National Energy Board's environmental scrutiny of such applications, says Canada's natural resources minister.

The federal regulator will proceed with its examination of applications for TransCanada's Energy East and Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain pipeline projects, Jim Carr said during a conference call Wednesday.

"They have not stopped. The process continues," Carr said from Paris, where he attended an International Energy Agency ministerial meeting ahead of a United Nations-sponsored summit on climate change later this month.

"There will be a transition as we amend the ways in which the National Energy Board goes about the process of evaluating these projects and we will announce those changes as soon as we can. But the process continues."

The focus on Energy East and Trans Mountain — two proposals to get Alberta and Saskatchewan oil to tidewater on the east and west coasts, respectively — has intensified in the wake of President Barack Obama's rejection of the Keystone XL pipeline.

Carr also reiterated the new Liberal government's opposition to Enbridge's proposed Northern Gateway pipeline.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau sent a mandate letter to Carr last week instructing him to "modernize" the National Energy Board by ensuring it reflects regional views and boasts sufficient expertise in environmental science, community development and indigenous traditional knowledge.

"We're in favour of a process that's more inclusive because our goal is to help Canadians be confident in the regulatory process," Carr said.

> **"We're in favour of a process that's more inclusive.**
> Jim Carr

"I understand that any changes we make to the process will have an effect on projects.

"I know that it's important and we will be reviewing the situation and we will give you the results as soon as we can."

TransCanada Corp. said if the government decides to explore potential improvements to the National Energy Board's system, the company would want to participate in the conversation.

"We believe that strong regulation leads to strong and safe pipelines and other projects," TRP spokesman Tim Duboyce said Wednesday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

APPOINTMENTS

Shell Canada president stepping aside

The head of Royal Dutch Shell's Canadian operations is leaving her position at the end of this year.

Lorraine Mitchelmore has been Shell Canada's president and country chairwoman for past six years and has led the global energy giant's heavy oil business for three.

Mitchelmore says she decided to move on in order to spend more time with her two daughters, the youngest of whom is in Grade 6. She says that her next career steps will involve contributing to Canada's prosperity by serving on select boards.

Michael Crothers — now vice-president of unconventionals and North America for Shell — will be the company's next leader in Canada starting Jan. 1.

Shell recently scrapped its Carmon Creek oilsands project in northwestern Alberta and opened a major carbon capture and storage project northeast of Edmonton.

Mitchelmore said in a statement that she's proud of what her team accomplished during her time at Shell Canada, bringing down operating costs by 30 per cent and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent.

"And, with the recent start-up of the Quest carbon capture and storage project, we have created a blueprint to advance CCS globally," Mitchelmore said.

"I appreciate that there is uncertainty in our business environment, but with our focus on improving economic and environmental competitiveness, I believe that both Shell and Canada's energy industry are well-positioned to weather current headwinds and seize future opportunities."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

50%
Electricity prices have climbed roughly 50 per cent over the past five years in Ontario, while Alberta has seen increases of about 10 per cent.
TransAlta

TransAlta chief executive Dawn Farrell says rate hikes are possible as the province moves away from coal-fired electricity plants. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Transition from coal sparking rate debate

ENERGY

'Real risk' of price spikes, volatility for consumers

Change is coming to Alberta's electricity sector, but industry watchers are divided on how it will affect rates for consumers already hit hard by the enduring global oil price slump.

Pointing to Ontario, TransAlta chief executive Dawn Farrell recently raised the spectre of rate hikes while pushing for the Calgary-based utility's proposed plan to transition away from coal-fired power plants.

There is a "real risk to consumers, including Alberta businesses, of price spikes and volatility" as the province moves away from coal-fired generation and adds more renewable energy, she wrote in an opinion piece that ran in two Alberta newspapers.

In Ontario, she pointed out, electricity prices have climbed roughly 50 per cent over the past five years compared to 10 per cent in Alberta in the same period.

That's "largely due to an aggressive program to retire coal generation and subsidize rapid renewable energy growth," she wrote.

But Ben Thibault, director of the Pembina Institute's electricity program, says Alberta shouldn't see Ontario-style spikes because renewable power costs have come down significantly since Ontario started transitioning, and there are also more options when it comes to supplies.

"There's some qualitative reasons that I think we're in different circumstances," Thibault said.

> **Almost everything points back to the 'off coal' decision of 2003.**
> Tom Adams, independent energy consultant

Alberta's privatized power market will also help allocate investments to the best generating options, he said.

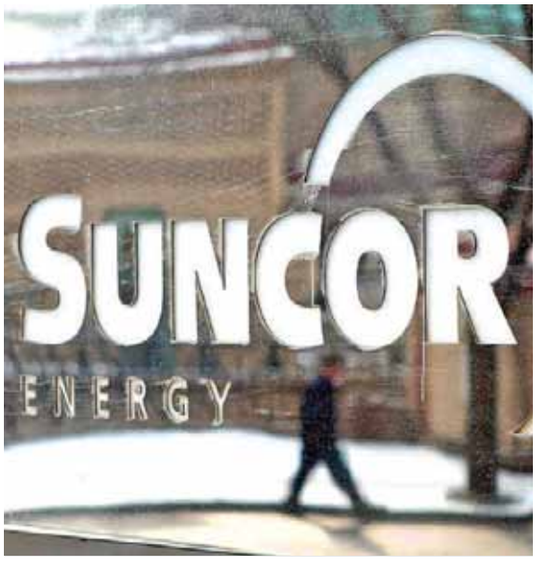
"We have a market in place in Alberta that will find the cheapest alternative generating sources, so I think this transition can be done in a way that is a more measured approach," said Thibault.

Whether Ontario's price spikes have been caused entirely by its transition away from coal-fired power plants is also subject to debate.

Tom Adams, an independent energy consultant, has been highly critical of Ontario's transition and blames the rate hikes on the coal phase-out.

"Almost everything points back to the 'off coal' decision of 2003," said Adams.

Alberta's NDP government is set to unveil its power transition plan before the Paris climate change conference starting Nov. 30. THE CANADIAN PRESS



Suncor and Canadian Oil Sands are embroiled in a bitter takeover battle. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

'Hope is not a strategy'

OIL

Suncor at odds with takeover target COS

The war of words is intensifying between oilsands giant Suncor Energy and its reluctant takeover target, Canadian Oil Sands.

Suncor issued an open letter to COS shareholders on Nov. 12 — under the heading "hope is not a strategy" — reiterating its view that sticking with the status quo is a risky proposition.

In return, COS deemed the letter a "desperate attempt to scare shareholders." The leadership of COS has urged its shareholders to do nothing, accusing Suncor of being opportunistic and exploiting inside information it has about an oilsands project they jointly own.

Both companies are partners in the Syncrude oilsands development north of Fort McMurray, Alta. — COS the largest owner with 37 per cent and Suncor with 12 per cent.

Suncor said COS has "consistently over-promised and under-delivered" when it comes to performance at Syncrude, which has faced a litany of production issues over the years.

Suncor has shown no signs that it's willing to sweeten its all-stock bid, noting the offer is worth more now than when it was first announced on Oct. 5 because its share price has risen.

It now says the offer is worth $4.7 billion — around $400 million more than when it first launched its hostile bid. The offer would also see Suncor taking on $2.2 billion in debt COS had as of Sept. 30, bringing the deal's total price tag to $6.9 billion.

"We don't think hope is an appropriate strategy for Canadian Oil Sands," Suncor CEO Steve Williams wrote in the missive. "Why? While no one has a crystal ball when it comes to oil prices, the current market outlook doesn't see oil prices getting back to US$60 per barrel until at least 2020."

He also accused COS leadership of "misleading spin" about challenges the company faces.

In a release Thursday afternoon, COS fired back.

"Fearmongering will not breathe life into a dead offer," said COS CEO Ryan Kubik.

Earlier, in a notice on its website, COS warned Suncor is paying brokers to get shareholders to tender their stock to the bid.

"We don't think that's right. We think our shareholders should decide for themselves, free from the influence of brokers being financially compensated to do Suncor's work for them," the company said.

Suncor spokeswoman Sneh Seetal said the practice, which is relatively common, is meant to ensure retail shareholders are informed about the offer, and that brokers are compensated for the time it takes to reach out to them.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

BDC earmarks $500 million more for small businesses

The Business Development Bank of Canada is setting aside $500 million in extra financing for small and medium businesses affected by low oil prices.

The Crown corporation says the money is intended to help businesses diversify, increase their efficiency, improve financial management and buy new technology and equipment.

The increase is a 40 per cent boost compared with the bank's normal lending in the sector, BDC spokesman Shawn Salewski says.

He adds financing will likely be concentrated in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland.

The development bank also plans to provide advice to companies to help them weather the current economic downturn.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TransCanada to expand natural gas system

TransCanada Corp. says its NOVA Gas Transmission Ltd. subsidiary has signed contracts that will require a $570-million system expansion for 2018.

The company says NOVA Gas has signed firm contracts to transport about 2.7 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day.

TransCanada says growth in northwestern Alberta and northeastern British Columbia are the primary drivers for these new contracts.

The expansion includes multiple projects that total 88 kilometres of pipeline, one new compressor, about 35 new and expanded meter stations and other associated facilities.

TransCanada says applications to build and operate the project will be filed with the National Energy Board next year. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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U.S. President Barack Obama chats with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at the G20 summit in Antalya, Turkey, recently. Canada will join the UN climate-change conference in Paris, beginning Nov. 30. EPA/TOLGA BOZOGLU/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Dion backs Obama on climate change

ENVIRONMENT

Minister agrees 'urgent' threat needs action now

Canada is backing strong warnings from U.S. President Barack Obama about the need for nations to act on the "urgent, growing" threat of climate change.

In an address to a business audience at the APEC summit in Manila, Philippines, Wednesday, Obama laid out the threat of climate change, saying the "patterns and the science don't lie" and that no nation is immune to the consequences.

"Temperatures and sea levels are rising, ice caps are melting, storms are strengthening," he said. "If we want to prevent the worst effects of climate change before it's too late, the time to act is now, and it is going to affect people's bottom lines." Obama said.

His comments come as nations prepare to gather in Paris later this month in a bid to reach new agreement to curb greenhouse gases.

Obama's remarks were endorsed Wednesday by Foreign Affairs Minister Stephane Dion, who agreed with an analogy that climate change is a cancer.

"It's the worst threat we are facing during this century," Dion told reporters.

He said Canada will be a strong advocate for a climate change deal and will work with the United States and summit host France to make it happen.

"We will be strong on the floor. We will speak to any country that may have difficulties because we need to have unanimity at the end of the day," Dion said, adding that leaders are taking the upcoming talks "seriously" and there is "momentum" for a deal.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

DEFENCE

Expanding military training a possibility

The country's new defence minister opened the door Wednesday to expanding the Canadian training mission in Iraq beyond just teaching Kurdish peshmerga fighters, saying the soldiers will go where it makes sense and where they can have the greatest impact.

Harjit Sajjan said options for the Trudeau government's beefed-up commitment to the campaign against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) are still being formulated, but it's clear some of the boundaries put in place by the previous government are either going to be removed or relaxed.

The former Conservative government chose to align itself with the Kurds, who operate in a semi-autonomous region in northern Iraq and have shown the most willingness to battle extremists.

Sajjan says he's talking with the U.S.-led coalition on where Canadian troops would be of most use but would not rule out expanding the training mission to include conventional army units and Iraqi forces in the country's south.

"I'm open to looking at all the different options," said Sajjan, who did three tours in Afghanistan and one in the Balkans as a reserve officer.

"I'm not looking at just from the Kurds perspective, or the Iraqi perspective; I'm looking at how we can have a meaningful contribution."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

"I'm spending a lot of time making sure we get this right.
Harjit Sajjan, minister of National Defence

MONTREAL

Call for killings leads to charges

A Montreal man allegedly behind a video that called for the revenge killing of "Arabs" in Quebec has been charged with inciting hatred, uttering death threats and being responsible for a hoax terrorist threat.

Jesse Pelletier, 24, was allegedly the author of a video that surfaced over the weekend calling for the province to be "cleaned" of its "Arab" population. The person in the video suggested the recording was made "the day after the attacks in Paris."

"Starting next week, there will be murders across Quebec," said the man, who was dressed as the Joker character from the Batman series and waved a replica handgun in the video. "We will eliminate one Arab each week to get rid of them and clean up the province of Quebec. We are a group of 10 people and we will all eliminate them, one by one."

A still from the video. SCREENGRAB

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Minister seeks to reassure Canadians

SECURITY

CSIS director stresses checks on expected 25K refugees

Top federal public safety and national security officials tried to allay public fears they might not properly screen 25,000 Syrian refugees expected by year's end, and downplayed Tuesday any threat to Canada in the wake of the Paris attacks.

At a news conference flanked by his senior advisers, Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale said the government will not change the timeline for meeting its campaign promise of fast-tracking refugees, nor is it cutting or reducing any of the necessary checks to meet that timeline.

The Liberal plan, yet to be outlined by the immigration minister, will use "layers" of security checks on new arrivals to verify documents and identity, including checks of domestic and international databases, "biometrics" verifications such as fingerprints, and personal interviews by officials "to make sure at the end of the day we achieve the humanitarian objective and do so in a way that respects the security and health imperatives that Canadians expect," said Goodale.

Michel Coulombe, head of CSIS, Canada's spy agency, said the Canadian Security Intelligence Service was an "integral part" of developing the screening procedures.

"I want Canadians to know that as director of CSIS I am confident the measures in place are robust and again I have full confidence in terms of being appropriate."

Goodale and his officials insisted "there is no rationale" that warrants any change to the threat level in Canada, which has been "medium" since October 2014.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Ralph Goodale said the timeline won't change. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

ISIL

Ambassador now calls group Daesh

The U.S. ambassador to Canada is using yet another name — "Daesh" — for the multi-monikered terrorist group known variously as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and the Islamic State.

Politicians are increasingly using the D-word for two simple reasons: to strip the group of its credibility and to steer away from the Islam-versus-the-West dynamic it apparently craves.

"I'm using the term 'Daesh' now, instead of ISIL," Bruce Heyman said in an interview.

"I think it's unfair to refer to Islam, and it's totally inappropriate to think of it as a state — so anything calling it the 'Islamic State' is wrong."

Arabs who oppose the group customarily use a version of Daesh, as do European politicians and U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, among others.

The group apparently hates it so much it threatened to cut out the tongues of those who use it. That's because it sounds like an insult, resembling the Arabic word "daes," which refers to something that stomps, or crushes. THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

B.C. judge says RCMP may have acted illegally

A B.C. Supreme Court judge says there's evidence the RCMP acted illegally during a terrorism sting operation and has ordered police to submit documents.

The Mounties may be guilty of knowingly facilitating a terrorist act.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Man arrested on Parliament Hill in court

A Toronto man arrested for allegedly carrying a hidden weapon on Parliament Hill was remanded in custody Wednesday after a brief court appearance.

Yasin Ali, 56, was detained by the Parliamentary Protective Service on Tuesday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

FINANCES

Missing investment dealer and ex-Olympian probed for fraud

A missing investment dealer and former Canadian Olympic rower has had his licence terminated by a mutual funds company in the midst of its fraud investigation, one of at least three probes in the case.

Investia Financial Services Inc. is investigating Harold Backer, who hasn't been seen since Nov. 3 and is also the subject of two missing-persons investigations — in his hometown of Victoria, B.C., and in Washington state.

"As soon as we knew the situation, that Mr. Backer had disappeared, we started the investigation," said Investia spokesman Pierre Picard.

"Mr. Backer failed to follow our policies and procedures, which required him to disclose all outside business activities," the company said in a statement issued by Picard.

He said the investigation was also prompted by a letter Backer sent to some clients, in which he apologized for mismanaging their money, and the company's discussions "with affected clients."

"Investia has terminated Mr. Backer's registration due to a fraud investigation," the statement said.

The Victoria Police Department has said Backer, 52, told his wife on Nov. 3 that he was going for a bike ride but failed to return home.

Backer competed in rowing in the 1984, 1988 and 1992 Olympics. THE CANADIAN PRESS

20

The number of clients Harold Backer had with Investia.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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A French soldier enforcing the Vigipirate plan, France's national security alert system, in front of the Eiffel Tower on Wednesday. JOEL SAGET/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Ringleader may be dead after raid on apartment

Paris

France vows 'everything is being done' to stop attackers

Belgian Justice Minister Koen Geens says he cannot confirm the suspected mastermind of the Paris attacks was among those killed in a raid against an apartment north of the French capital.

He says Belgian Abdelhamid Abaaoud was "not among those arrested or those who have been identified."

French officials previously said Abaaoud was not among those arrested in Wednesday's raid in Saint-Denis, but didn't eliminate the possibility that he was killed, saying the identities of those slain are still being investigated.

The Belgian minister spoke after a cabinet meeting late Wednesday which was assessing what measures should be taken to counter the increased threat of terrorism.

He called Wednesday's raid a "big breakthrough" because it shows law enforcement officials can track down suspects.

Meanwhile, security camera video from inside a restaurant as it is fired on by a rifle-wielding gunman has been posted online that provides a new look at last week's Paris shooting rampage.

The video posted on the Daily Mail website shows a nearly empty restaurant erupt into chaos with bullets smashing into walls and diners and staff diving for cover.

French police have banned public demonstrations until Nov. 22 in Paris and surrounding towns in the latest utilization of expanded security measures permitted under the state of emergency installed following last week's bloody attacks.

Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said "everything is being done to capture" the attackers.

Both France and Russia are pursuing UN Security Council resolutions that seek to unite the international community in combating the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

But Russian Ambassador Vitaly Churkin says ignoring the Syrian government in the effort is "weakening the possibility of our joint fight against terrorism."

Russia on Wednesday circulated its draft resolution to all 15 council members, and France is expected to circulate its own shortly.

French Ambassador Francois Delattre told reporters that Russia's draft "is a contribution that we will examine very attentively."

France hopes that its own text will be adopted by the council as early as next week. It has not shared details.

Current council president Britain says members want to take action quickly on a "strong as possible" response to the recent Paris attacks.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RADICALIZATION

The 'signs' were there

Much about Abdelhamid Abaaoud's path to armed Islamic radicalism remains mysterious. In the words of Koen Geens, the Belgian justice minister, he mutated from a student at an upscale Brussels school into "an extremely professional commando," one seemingly able to slip across borders at will.

The wanted jihadi's own father believes prison — where he served time for petty crimes — changed him for the worse. After his son got out, Omar Abaaoud noticed "signs of radicalization," the elder Abaaoud's lawyer, Nathalie Gallant, told RTBF broadcasting Wednesday.

If so, that would fit the pattern of a number of jihadis who were radicalized in prison.

Abaaoud came onto the international radar as a radical Muslim combatant for the first time in February 2014, said Jasmine Opperman, a senior director with the independent Terrorism Research & Analysis Consortium (TRAC).

During the campaign, Abaaoud was filmed at the wheel of a pickup truck dragging a load of mutilated corpses following a mass execution committed by Islamic State at a place called Hraytan.

Abaaoud, by then using a nom de guerre, Abou Omar Soussi, wore the same kind of hat as many Afghan mujahedeen, and joked and appeared happy.

"His father was very much against him going there," the Belgian source told AP. But there was much worse news for the family.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

VIDEO

The restaurant with security footage is not named in Daily Mail's accompanying article but examination by The Associated Press suggests it is Casa Nostra, a pizzeria near the Bonne Biere, another restaurant hit by the attackers and where five people were killed.

KILLING

Captives executed by ISIL

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group said Wednesday that it has killed Norwegian and Chinese captives after earlier demanding ransoms for the two men.

The extremist group published two images of the men in the second-to-last page of its English-language magazine, saying they had been "executed after being abandoned by kafir nations and organizations." "Kafir" is the Arabic word for infidel. In the images, the men both appeared to have been shot to death.

The Norwegian man had been identified as Ole Johan Grimsgaard-Ofstad, 48, a graduate student in political philosophy from Porsgrunn, south of Oslo. The Chinese man had been identified as Fan Jinghui, 50, a self-described "wanderer" from Beijing who once taught middle school.

The militants did not say when or where the two were captured when announcing their captivity in a previous issue of the magazine, which showed them in yellow jumpsuits. However, the last post on Grimsgaard-Ofstad's Facebook page, dated Jan. 24, said he had arrived in Idlib, Syria, on his way to Hama.

Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg told a press conference that the government cannot confirm the killing, but said "we have no reasons to doubt it."

"It is painful for the family and the whole country," she said. She called ISIL a "barbaric group" and said "we do not pay ransom." She added that "even if it hurts, we should never let the terrorists win."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

#JESUISCHIEN

Twittersphere unites over police dog killed in raid

People around the world are sending messages of support for a police dog that was killed during an early morning police raid in a Paris suburb that left two alleged suspects dead. The hashtag #JeSuisChien (I Am Dog) was the top trending topic in France at 9 a.m. Toronto time, with people sharing messages of solidarity with Diesel, the dog. The seven-year-old Malinois was part of the French RAID police unit. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Egyptian soldiers collect personal belongings of victims at the crash site of a passenger airplane bound for St. Petersburg in Russia, which crashed in Hassana, Egypt's Sinai Peninsula.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Plane downed by bomb: ISIL

FLIGHT 9268

Image released in latest issue of extremist publication

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group has released a photo of the bomb it says was used to bring down a Russian passenger plane in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula last month, killing all 224 people on board.

The picture was published in the latest issue of the extremist group's English-language magazine, with the caption "EXCLUSIVE – Image of the IED used to bring down the Russian airliner."

The extremist group, which has a powerful affiliate in the Sinai, had previously claimed to have downed the plane, which was mainly carrying Russian tourists, without offering further details. It said the attack was to avenge Russia's air campaign against the group in Syria.

The group said it "discovered a way to compromise the security at the Sharm el-Sheikh International Airport," without providing further details. It said it initially planned to bring down a plane from one of the countries participating in the U.S.-led coalition that has been striking it in Syria and Iraq. But it says it changed the target to a Russian plane after Moscow began launching airstrikes in Syria in September.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A can of Schweppes Gold, and what appears to be other bomb components made of plastic and metal.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Soccer matches continue as 'life must go on' in France
Soccer matches around the country will go ahead in France this weekend in the wake of the deadly attacks in Paris to show that "life must go on," France's secretary of sport said.

In an interview Wednesday with sports daily L'Equipe, Thierry Braillard said calling games off would be "exactly what these barbarians want," referring to the gunmen and suicide bombers who attacked Paris last Friday. Braillard said French soccer league president Frederic Thiriez is "totally" in agreement with the decision.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SENTIMENT

Muslim population facing backlash in U.S.

Muslims around the U.S. are facing backlash following the deadly attacks in Paris, including vandalism to mosques and Islamic centres, hate-filled phone and online messages and threats of violence.

Advocacy leaders say they have come to expect some anti-Muslim sentiment following such attacks, but they now see a spike that seems notable, stirred by anti-Muslim sentiment in the media.

"The picture is getting increasingly bleak," said Ibrahim Hooper, a spokesman for the Washington, D.C.-based Council on American-Islamic Relations. "There's been an accumulation of anti-Islamic rhetoric in our lives and that I think has triggered these overt acts of violence and vandalism."

He said the rise in the level of anti-Muslim sentiment is reflected by some GOP presidential candidates, governors and others speaking out in opposition to the U.S. accepting more Syrian refugees.

> **The picture is getting increasingly bleak.**
> Ibrahim Hooper

Hooper said the council is seeing an increase in anti-Muslim incidents since Friday's attacks in Paris.

Nihad Awad, national executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, asked law enforcement officials to step up patrols at mosques and other Islamic institutions.

In Connecticut, the FBI and local police are investigating reports of multiple gunshots fired at the Baitul Aman mosque in Meriden.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Rescue workers inspect the scene of an explosion at a mobile-phone market in Kano, Nigeria, on Wednesday, set off by a Boko Haram suicide bomber. MUHAMMED GIGINYU/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Suicide attacks kill 49 in Nigeria

TERRORISM

Boko Haram responsible; military seems unable to cope

The suicide bomber exploded as truckers were tucking into dinner at the bustling marketplace where vendors urged them to buy sugar cane. At least 34 people were killed and another 80 wounded in Yola, a town packed with refugees from Nigeria's Islamic uprising, emergency officials said Wednesday.

Later Wednesday, two more suicide bombers killed at least 15 people in the northern city of Kano and injured 53, according to police. Nigeria's National Emergency Management Agency said more than 100 were wounded.

The blasts were the latest by Boko Haram, Nigeria's home-grown extremists whose six-year insurgency has killed 20,000 and forced 2.3 million to flee their homes.

Boko Haram was named Wednesday as the world's most deadly extremist group in the Global Terrorism Index. Deaths attributed to Boko Haram increased by 317 per cent in 2014 to 6,644 compared to 6,073 blamed on the Islamic State group. Boko Haram pledged allegiance to IS in March and calls itself that group's West Africa Province.

Wednesday's explosions came as President Muhammadu Buhari pressed his campaign against Nigeria's endemic corruption, blamed for hampering the fight against the insurgents. Buhari accused his predecessor's national security adviser of stealing billions of dollars meant to buy weapons to fight Boko Haram, when soldiers had just a few bullets and the Islamic extremists were rampaging across northeast Nigeria.

Critics long have blamed corruption for the military's failures. Buhari ordered the arrests of several former high-ranking officials allegedly linked to fraudulent and fictitious arms contracts totalling $5.4 billion, one of his advisers, Femi Adesina, said in a statement.

> **Those responsible for these crimes must be held accountable.**
> John Kirby, spokesman
> U.S. State Department

"Thousands of needless Nigerian deaths would have been avoided" if the money had been properly spent, Adesina said.

The unending violence has torn apart Nigeria's northeast. In the city of Yola, hit by a suicide bombing for the third time in as many months, relatives searching for missing loved ones converged on the two main hospitals.

"I couldn't find them at the hospital so I had to come to the mortuary," said a distraught Musa Adamu.

He said his brother, Kamal, was selling sugar cane to truckers and his uncle had gone to look for him.

Adamu found both their bodies in the morgue.

Eight children were among the dead, said Yola Specialist Hospital director Dr. Bala Sa'id.

State Department spokesman John Kirby said the U.S. condemns the bombings and renews its commitment to work with Nigeria and its neighbours to defeat Boko Haram and to address violent extremism in the region.

"We denounce the callous terrorist acts that have taken place repeatedly in Nigeria and other countries in the Lake Chad Basin and offer our condolences to the victims and their families," he said.

"Of course, those responsible for these crimes must be held accountable."

Many Nigerians welcomed the order for the arrest of Sambo Dasuki, the former national security adviser accused of diverting billions that should have equipped the army.

"Beyond corruption, Dasuki should be charged for high treason: Men, women and children died because their armed forces could not defend them," one angry Nigerian, D. Olusegun, tweeted.

Buhari ordered the arrest of Dasuki, a key adviser to former President Goodluck Jonathan from 2012. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

$5B

The annual defence budget of Nigeria
Critics long have blamed corruption for the military's failures, asking how the insurgents can be better armed than Nigerian soldiers in the face of such a large annual military budget. Last year that figure was supplemented by a loan of $1 billion.

IN BRIEF

Black women march in Brazil to protest inequality

Thousands of black women from across Brazil marched on the nation's capital on Wednesday to call attention to the violence and discrimination they suffer.

Organizer Valdecir Nascimento said it was in response to the "vulnerability and fragility" that Brazil's more than 57 million black and mixed-race women face daily. They're likelier to die in childbirth and be murdered than white women. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Australia protects ranch from being poached

The Australian government has barred foreigners from buying a company that owns the world's largest cattle ranch and other Australian farmland greater in area than South Korea.

The company, S. Kidman & Co. Ltd., owns Anna Creek Station cattle ranch, which covers 23,677 square kilometres of arid central Australia. Half of it is inside a military rocket firing range.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

U.S., Cuba agree to protect fish, corals

The United States and Cuba signed an agreement Wednesday to join forces and protect the vast array of fish and corals they share as countries separated by just 140 kilometres, the first environmental accord since announcing plans to renew diplomatic relations.

"We recognize we all share the same ocean and face the same challenges of understanding, managing, and conserving critical marine resources for future generations," said Kathryn Sullivan, chief of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The memorandum signed by U.S. and Cuban officials in Havana directs scientists with the Florida Keys and the Texas Flower Garden Banks national sanctuaries to collaborate with researchers at two similarly fragile and protected reserves: Guanahacabibes National Park and the Banco de San Antonio, located on the island's westernmost region.

Ocean currents carry many of the same fish and organisms off the coast of Cuba into the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean, making collaboration on topics like preservation and sustainability an area of mutual interest for scientists in both countries.

> **We all share the same ocean and face the same challenges of understanding, managing and conserving critical marine resources for future generations.** Kathryn Sullivan, NOAA

"This opens the door to collaborating on many, many fronts so the so-called invisible lines of the Gulf (of Mexico) disappear," said Daniel Whittle, the EDF's senior director for Cuba.

"In my mind, this was long overdue." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Syrian President Bashar Assad reviews the presidential guard during a welcoming ceremony in Athens in 2003.
PETROS GIANNAKOURIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Assad called 'lesser evil'

MIDDLE EAST

Desire to save Syria's leader grows as ISIL gains ground

The tide of global rage against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) lends greater urgency to ending the jihadis' ability to operate at will from a base in war-torn Syria. That momentum could also force a re-evaluation of what to do about President Bashar Assad and puts a renewed focus on the position of his key patrons, Russia and Iran.

The Syrian leader has lost much of the country to ISIL and other groups in the four-year war — half the population has been displaced, many areas have been levelled and masses of refugees are flooding Europe. Along the way, Assad's brutal military response has made him persona non grata in most of the world.

Portraying himself as the only viable alternative to jihadi rule, Assad has labelled all his enemies "terrorists" — a designation that, in the wake of the recent attacks on civilians by IS, may find greater resonance.

Cutting a deal with Assad would be the "lesser evil," Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Garcia-Margallo said Wednesday.

"If we want peace, we have to find a way of getting along with Assad, at least in a transition period," Garcia-Margallo said.

Britain's former military chief, Gen. David Richards, echoed that sentiment, telling the BBC a ceasefire in Syria could allow Assad and his military to take a leading role in battling ISIL.

But the U.S. and its allies don't want to see Assad benefit from any effort to dislodge ISIL from territory it controls in Syria — unlike in Iraq, where the Baghdad government is considered legitimate by the world community.

A temporary reprieve is starting to seem more possible, setting the stage for an arrangement in which Assad is part of a transition government that has a role in the priority of defeating ISIL — but then quietly makes way.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Grenade found in Kosovo constitutional court yard
Kosovo's constitutional Court said Wednesday that a hand grenade was found at its yard amid a tense political situation in the country. Police exploded the grenade with a remote control "without human or material damage."

The same day, Kosovo police used tear gas to disperse opposition supporters protesting the arrest of a lawmaker who has participated in violence inside parliament aimed at trying to force the government to renounce recent deals that would more powers to ethnic-Serb communities. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

YEMEN

Poorest country in Arab world suffering

The United Nations says 5,700 people have been killed in the conflict in Yemen since March 26, including 830 women and children, while efforts to coax all sides into another attempt at peace talks continue.

Meanwhile, basic services are collapsing in what was already the Arab world's poorest country, the UN's humanitarian co-ordinator for Yemen, Johannes Van Der Klaauw, told reporters Wednesday.

He said 21.2 million people, or 82 per cent of the country's population, require some kind of humanitarian assistance. Fourteen million people lack sufficient access to health care. And 1.8 million children have been out of school since the conflict began.

"Nearly 320,000 children are acutely malnourished," he added.

He did not say how many civilians were among the 5,700 killed during the conflict. The UN human rights office in late October reported that more than 2,600 civilians had been killed so far, about two-thirds of them by airstrikes.

Since March, a coalition led by neighbouring Saudi Arabia and backed by the United States in support of Yemen's internationally recognized government has been fighting Iran-backed Houthi rebels who had seized large parts of the country, including the capital, Sanaa.

The international community has pleaded for months for the coalition to ease restrictions on crucial commercial imports such as fuel and medical supplies.

Van Der Klaauw said supplies of fuel, food, medicines and other supplies were dangerously low, while food prices have soared.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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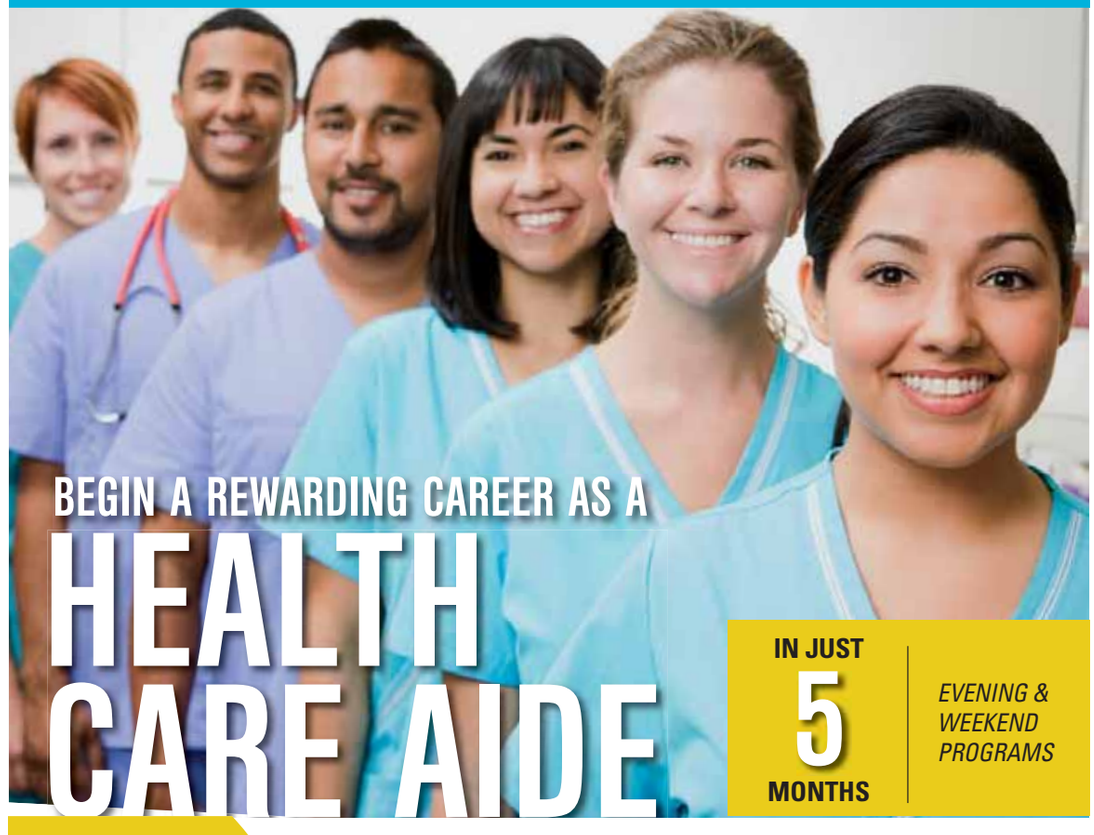

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CONSUMERS

Dinosaur claws, fake poop on watchdog's naughty-toys list

A consumer watchdog group says dinosaur claws inspired by the movie Jurassic World and a substance that looks like poop are among the worst toys for Christmas this year.

The Massachusetts-based World Against Toys Causing Harm released its annual list of hazardous toys Wednesday.

The group says the velociraptor claws can cause eye and facial injuries, and the Play-Doh-like substance contains wheat that could cause allergies.

The list also includes a quick-folding trampoline, which the group says can lead to injuries. WATCH says the items singled out represent common problems in toys.

The group also urges parents to be cautious when buying toys online, where nearly half of purchases are expected to be made this year.

WATCH President Joan Siff said 3 million units of toys have been recalled just in the past year for defects that could injure children.

Many of the toys were still on store shelves when recalls were issued, she said.

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Jurassic World velociraptor claws can cause eye and facial injuries, says World Against Toys Causing Harm.
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IN BRIEF

CP Rail faces obstacles in takeover of Norfolk

Canadian Pacific Railway's dream of creating North America's largest railroad faces a long and uncertain future following Norfolk Southern's cool initial response to the Calgary company's $28-billion US takeover proposal. CP needs to overcome several obstacles, including concerns over concentration, possible opposition from organized labour and a chilly reception from Virginia-based Norfolk Southern, which described the proposal as an "unsolicited, low-premium, non-binding, highly conditional indication of interest."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada's four largest candy makers all settled class-action lawsuits without admitting guilt of alleged price-fixing in the chocolate industry in the country. ISTOCK

Crown wraps up chocolate case

INVESTIGATION

Last charges against candy manufacturers dropped

An eight-year probe into allegations of price-fixing in Canada's multimillion-dollar chocolate-bar industry has ended with the last charges being dropped, Canada's competition watchdog said Wednesday.

The Public Prosecution Service of Canada entered a stay of proceedings against Nestlé Canada and former president Robert Leonidas, the Competition Bureau said in a brief statement Wednesday.

Leonidas was one of three industry executives at three different companies charged in 2013 with conspiring to fix chocolate prices between 2002 and 2008. No reason was given for the Crown's decision.

Charges against Mars Canada, former Nestlé Canada executive Sandra Martinez, candy distributor ITWAL Ltd. and its former CEO, David Glenn Stevens, were also dropped on Sept. 8. Stevens is now ITWAL's chairman.

No explanation was offered.

The case against the chocolate industry began after Cadbury Adams brought the matter to the bureau's attention in 2007. The chocolate-maker received immunity from prosecution.

Hershey Canada Inc. pleaded guilty to one count of price-fixing related to communications with competitors in 2007 and was fined $4 million on June 22, 2013, in an Ontario Superior Court of Justice.

The other three companies, Mars, Nestle and Itwal, and their three executives continued to defend against the allegations.

All four companies settled class-action lawsuits without admitting guilt. Nestlé Canada settled for $9 million, Cadbury Adams Canada for $5.7 million, Hershey Canada for $5.3 million and Mars Canada for $3.2 million.

The outcome of the case is not unusual, said Mihkel Tombak, a professor with the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management. The burden of proof in criminal cases is high, he said, noting the prosecution must prove the allegations beyond a reasonable doubt.

Hershey's sentencing hearing provided a glimpse into the allegations the companies were facing back in 2007. At the time, the four largest chocolate makers accounted for 75.3 per cent of chocolate sales in Canada, a market valued at $840 million, court heard. Nestlé was the market leader, court heard.

75.3%

In 2007, the four largest chocolate makers accounted for 75.3 per cent of sales in Canada, a market valued at $840 million, court heard.

During the period, senior employees at Hershey and their counterparts at other chocolate companies exchanged competitive pricing information, either directly or through their distributor, court heard.

However, the allegations were never proven in court.

The Competition Bureau said Tuesday that it considers the chocolate case closed.

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metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Thursday, November 19, 2015

CHANTAL HÉBERT: ON THE PM'S FIRST MISSTEP

"There was a glaring disconnect between Trudeau's insistence that it was business as usual on the refugee and the war-on-ISIL fronts, and the public's sense that the Paris attacks were a watershed event.

In January 1994, two months after his government was sworn in, Jean Chrétien folded himself in a small charter plane to go on his maiden foreign voyage as prime minister.

As leader of the opposition, Chrétien had described the jet Brian Mulroney had had outfitted for his official foreign travels as a needless luxury. For his first trip, the incoming Liberal prime minister opted for the flying equivalent of a sardine can, a practice he would abandon at the first decent political opportunity.

Chrétien hit three European capitals in less than a week, with a pit stop in London, an overnight stay in Paris and a NATO summit in Brussels. He might as well have been a tourist on a whirlwind budget tour.

At a joint news conference with Prime Minister John Major in London, a British cabinet sex scandal stole the show.

The highlight of Chrétien's Paris stop was a Quebec play he attended with François Mitterand. He may or may not have mentioned a possible Quebec referendum to the French president. In any event, by the time of the 1995 vote Mitterand was no longer in office.

In Brussels, the issue of the fratricidal war in the former Yugoslavia dominated the NATO summit, but while Canada had peacekeeping boots on the ground, there is no public record of a significant Chrétien contribution to the discussion.

Over his visit, the new Canadian prime minister granted the European media no interviews; nor was there a chat on the trip home with those of us who covered his tour. Journalists flew on commercial planes.

In a review of the Liberal prime minister's first appearance on the international circuit, the correspondent for the Belgian daily Le Soir wrote that Chrétien had essentially travelled incognito.

By those standards, Justin Trudeau should have passed his first test on the international scene with flying colors.

He raised matters of substance at every stop. In Manila, he served notice on Canada's Asia-Pacific partners that they should not take for granted a swift ratification by Parliament of the just-negotiated Trans-Pacific Partnership.

At the G20 meeting in Turkey, his infrastructure-spending plan was praised by Barack Obama.

In preparation for the upcoming climate change summit, foreign affairs minister Stéphane Dion started to articulate a more activist Canadian tone in the international environment talks.

But while Trudeau probably made a positive impression on other government leaders, the domestic reviews have been decisively mixed. As media coverage goes, this has been his worst week since before the election campaign.

It is not just that Canadians saw more of French President François Hollande, or that the Paris attacks pushed non-security issues off to the sidelines or even that the latest terrorist developments made some Liberal policies a harder sell.

From a Canadian perspective, it was on tone that an unscripted Trudeau most came up short.

He may have denounced the Paris attacks in strong terms in private but, in his public communications, he did not rise to the occasion.

There was a glaring disconnect between Trudeau's quasi-dogmatic insistence that it was business as usual on the refugee and the war-on-ISIL fronts, and the public's sense that the attacks were a watershed event that deserved a fuller airing.

He seemed to shrug off the well-intentioned concern of many of his provincial and municipal allies as to his refugee timetable. When federal reassurance was needed, it was offered on a piecemeal basis and usually short on specifics.

Against the backdrop of the carnage in Paris, some otherwise endearing features of Trudeau's political persona, starting with his willingness to pose for selfies on demand, turned into liabilities. There are times when glamour is the opposite of gravitas.

Media reviews of Trudeau's post-Paris week were particularly scathing in Quebec, the province whose links with France are the strongest. Cartoonists had a field day at his expense.

But the feeling that the rookie prime minister was not at the top of his game as he handled the first unscripted challenge of his tenure was not limited to his home province.

The premature beginning of the end of the Trudeau post-election honeymoon is part of the collateral damage of the Paris attacks. That part of the damage is largely self-inflicted.

Chantal Hébert is a national affairs writer. Her column appears in Metro every Thursday.

THE MICROTREND: Storm selfies

Adding to the usual lessons of storm safety — watch for falling branches, report downed wires, unplug appliances — there's now a new rule: No selfies in front of the storm surge. With two major weather systems rocking the U.K. in the past week, a representative from the British environment agency has warned "The power of Mother Nature is a fascination to us all. Taking storm selfies may seem exhilarating. But over the last few years we've had an increasing number of people putting themselves and family members at severe risk." As the periodic dump of warm air and moisture known as El Niño hits this winter, more dangerous weather is likely on the way, including in Canada. So when it comes to taking risks and pulling tricks with a smartphone in hopes of social-media fame, stick to poking your friend in the eye with a selfie stick. THE INDEPENDENT

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

For some, a decline in Christian belief spells one thing: A fight

Radicalism loves radicalism. Power hates to rescind it. And the dominant fears the minority — lest they become it.

I'm talking, of course, about Christianity in North America.

The U.S. is 70 per cent avowed Christian. Canada, two-thirds. We are very Christian nations, and the Starbucks brew-haha over its non-denominational red holiday cups was a jolly reminder.

It points to something else, too: Some Christians here feel under attack. It's an odd sentiment, given their overwhelming company, until you start to factor in a few things, including a decade of headlines about how our countries are (slowly) losing their (Christian) religion, simultaneous headlines reporting the growth of other faiths, and Islam in particular, and the rise of social-justice movements that contravene some conservative Christian teachings.

The Pew Research Centre recently released a major survey that found the U.S. continues to become less religious, driven by younger generations, and something new: hints that those who are religious might be holding tighter than ever to their faith.

Religious Americans are by some measures "even more devout than they were a few years ago," the report noted, citing a modest growth in reading scripture or participating in prayer groups.

Alongside that, Christians in the U.S. are reporting that their faith is under threat: 72 per cent of Americans think religion is losing its influence in American life, 56 per cent think that's a bad thing, and a growing number want religion to play a greater role in politics, according to a Pew report from 2014. Perhaps in response to that, 50 per cent of white evangelicals feel they face "a lot" of discrimination.

In Canada, about half of us think the decline of religious involvement is bad for the country, according to an Angus Reid survey from last March. And while there's no similar question of discrimination in the survey, discrimination is certainly the claim made in the wake of Quebec's prayers-at-city-hall debate, or a B.C. Christian university's bid to become a law school, or Starbucks' red-washing of Christmas.

And I think that fear of irrelevance (unfounded though it may be), plays a role in today's anti-Muslim sentiment.

That Angus Reid survey — conducted after Charlie Hebdo and well before Paris — found 44 per cent of Canadians have a negative view of Islam, and 51 per cent think it's more likely than other religions to encourage violence.

Our predominantly — for now — Christian societies see another faith on the rise, one held often by non-whites, and to some that spells one thing: a fight.

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You're So Vain, Warren Beatty. Carly Simon confirms second verse of song is about him.

Brownstein's search for self

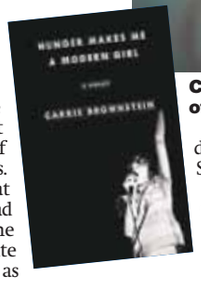
NEW BOOK

Rocker, writer, thinker looks at her life's journey so far

Ian Gormely
Metro | Canada

Performance is central to Carrie Brownstein's life, whether it's on stage as guitarist for rock trio Sleater-Kinney, or on the set of Portlandia, the sketch-comedy show she writes and stars in with fellow co-creator Fred Armisen.

But, as she reveals in her new memoir, Hunger Makes Me a Modern Girl, Brownstein assumed many roles throughout her life — fan, substitute teacher, academic — in her search for connection and identity.



"Much of what we project into the world is different permutations of ourselves," she says.

"I do think that the common thread is my writing. The reason that I write is to ask questions as much to answer them and also to form a connection with people."

She found the connection she was searching for in Olympia, Wash.'s close-knit music community, first as a member of riot grrrl band Excuse 17 and later with guitarist Corin Tucker and drummer Janet Weiss in Sleater-Kinney.

Carrie Brownstein's career has taken her from guitarist for Sleater-Kinney to co-creator of sketch-comedy show Portlandia. CONTRIBUTED

The book was inspired by a series of essays Brownstein wrote for NPR.

Using Steve Martin's memoir, Born Standing Up, as a template, it chronicles her search for a place in the world — the journey from being "disembodied to embodied" — through to Sleater-Kinney's initial split in 2006.

Brownstein purposely skirts rock bio clichés — there are no tawdry tales of sex and drugs in Hunger's pages.

Brownstein co-writes Portlandia with Fred Armisen. CONTRIBUTED

Rather, she wanted to pen a literary love letter to her bandmates, who recently came together again and released the new album No Cities to Love, and to whom she dedicates the book.

Olympia's communal, anti-corporate punk spirit gave birth to the feminist riot grrrl movement, and nurtured Brownstein in her early 20s. But she and her bandmates had ambitions beyond the insular college town.

"Sleater-Kinney didn't want to preach to the converted, we didn't want to limit ourselves," she says. "I didn't want to connect to a finite group of people."

That culminated in an opening slot for Pearl Jam in the early 2000s, putting Sleater-Kinney in front of thousands of people unaware of the band's history or politics.

"Putting yourself in new uncomfortable positions helps you clarify your point of view," she says.

"It helps you innovate and push forward. That's something I try to remember in everything I do."

THE MANY GIGS OF SLEATER-KINNEY

The members of Sleater-Kinney have spread their musical wings over the years.

Wild Flag: Brownstein and Weiss formed this quartet with Rebecca Cole and former Helium singer-guitarist Mary Timony. Their self-titled album from 2011 remains their only release.

Quasi: Prior to joining Sleater-Kinney, Weiss was one-half of keyboard-led indie rockers Quasi. The band remains a going concern, releasing their ninth album, Mole City, in 2013.

Heavens to Betsy: Tucker's pre-Sleater-Kinney duo were one of the primary groups associated with the riot grrrl movement, taking Excuse 17 out on tour with them in the early '90s.

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McGarrigles keep family lore alive

NEW RELEASES

Sisters' book is more tribute than musical memoir

Sue Carter
For Metro Canada

While it may seem impossible at the time, personal tragedy can sometimes lead to great art. When Canadian folk musician Kate McGarrigle died of cancer in 2010, her family began hosting an annual concert in her honour.

The events weren't just a tribute to her music as half of the beloved sister duo Kate and Anna McGarrigle, but to the extended family, including her parents, her oldest sister, Jane, and to Kate's children, Martha and Rufus Wainwright.

Charmed by the family's stories during the concert, Random House Canada executive publisher Louise Dennys approached Anna with the idea of putting them down on paper. Anna suggested that she co-write the book with Jane, who had already been developing a television series loosely based on life in Saint-Sauveur, the picturesque Quebec skiing village where the sisters grew up. The two had already co-written songs together, why not a book?

"When Anna asked me to join her, I was just overjoyed," says Jane. "Here was a real writing project, and a project dear to my heart. And I was going to do it with Anna who is always a blast to work with."

Mountain City Girls is a tender and often funny memoir told in brief first-person dispatches. Weaving together moments both significant and fleeting, the book includes favourite stories of their grandparents and ends in 1976, a year after Kate and Anna McGarrigle, the sisters' debut album was released.

"It wasn't to make a point of keeping the family lore alive," says Jane, "but it just seems to want to go on by itself."

From the beginning the sisters were clear they weren't interested in writing a music memoir. Anna's husband, Dane Lanken, had already published a scrapbook-style book that followed the musicians, and Martha Wainwright is currently working on her own autobiography.

Sisters Anna and Jane say their collaborations are sometimes like an episode of I Love Lucy. THE CANADIAN PRESS

"I know that she's going to talk about from a certain era on, what it was like to grow up in her family," says Anna.

"I didn't want to start telling stories about Kate. Martha might want to tell those stories. We wanted to go to another place, more in your face, to invite you in and come meet our grandfather."

Most of the manuscript was written with the sisters sitting across from each other at a table.

"When Anna's writing, she's so deep in her subject, she's really not there," says Jane. "I'd ask her a question about something, and I'd say, 'Hey Anna,' and there'd be no answer. She's not ignoring me, she's just not hearing me. It's like she's in this vapour."

The two joke that their collaboration at times recalled an I Love Lucy episode.

A chunk of writing would accidentally get deleted, or a printed chapter destined for the publisher would be left forgotten on a couch.

Although their editor suggested they start with a chronological timeline, Anna found linear storytelling a challenge.

"My husband calls me an anarchist because I can't do that. I can only write what I know — it's just the way I am."

Reliving family memories — in particular about their father, who died in 1965 — was an emotional experience that sometimes resulted in tears, but ultimately those shared stories brought the two sisters closer, says Jane, "knowing that often we're the only two people who remember."

Sue Carter is the editor at Quill & Quire magazine.

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Offending sensibilites with intent

JONATHAN FRANZEN

Controversial novelist tunes out criticism of latest book

When Jonathan Franzen was writing his breakout 2001 book The Corrections, he famously claimed to deter distraction by working in the dark while wearing noise-cancelling earphones and a blindfold.

Nowadays, sunless, soundless isolation might seem Franzen's only avenue to avoid the criticism that greets his every novel, essay or interview.

His latest tome, Purity, was met with enthusiastic reviews from some corners (the New York Times was positive, the Guardian called it "piercingly brilliant") and withering derision from others. The Star review considered it an "engaging and brilliant" yet flawed book.

As usual, the debates centred on Franzen himself — whether he was sexist, hostile of technology, or, well, actually serious about adopting an Iraqi orphan.

And as usual, Franzen donned his figurative blindfold and blocked most of it out.

"I don't read the stuff, so I don't have a clear idea of what anyone's complaining about," Franzen said recently in Toronto. "There is this online discourse, particularly on social media, that I would rather have nothing to do with, because it's mostly dumb, and set up to reward people taking extreme, irresponsible positions and to punish people who are trying to do nuance and moderation.

"I can afford not to care because people do read the books," he continued later. "So people with a lot of time on their hands and no real interest in what is true think I'm a bad person — so what? It's not going to end my career."

As long as people read his books, Jonathan Franzen is content to ignore online discourse. CONTRIBUTED

Franzen is speaking through a cough, juggling two packages of lozenges and feeling jet lag-"stoned" after a cross-continental flight. To avoid circulating germs, he forgoes a handshake in favour of an elbow bump.

It's a more congenial interaction than he's had with most journalists lately.

In particular, he describes an "insane exchange" with NPR host Terry Gross, who read Purity — which follows a debt-trodden young woman searching for her father's identity — and questioned Franzen's depiction of an erratic feminist character who insists her partner pee sitting down.

"Being a lifelong feminist, in the same way that I was hardest on liberal democrats in Freedom ... I felt it's really my duty as a novelist to push hard against the very things I believe in," he said. "What does it mean for a man to be a feminist? That's a question I found worth asking.

"I'm told that, yeah, people are sounding off about it. But that just means that I was asking the right questions."

The moment Franzen labels himself a "lifelong feminist," it's tempting to interpret a mischievous desire to provoke, a feeling that creeps up frequently.

"I don't let people take selfies at my events," he declares at one point. "Most people are cool with that, but there exist people who just can't, who plead and beg and say it won't have happened if I don't take a picture."

Later, he argues that the Internet's discourse "reminds one of the eighth-grade cafeteria." As he speaks, a recent Salon headline comes to mind: "5 times Jonathan Franzen trolled us this year."

But Franzen insists that he's never sought to worm his way under anyone's skin. In fact, he laments how the opinions he offers "in a polemical space" are confused with his published work.

Yet Franzen, sore throat and all, will not be silenced.

"It's not like I enjoy having people angry at me," Franzen said. "I would like everyone to say: 'Wonderful novel, John. Please write another.' It's not like I take pleasure in being mischaracterized and called a bad person.

"But I feel like a writer isn't doing her or his job if they're not standing up to existing power structures, including good liberal consensus," he continued.

"I'm attracted to points in the culture where dogma and reality have drifted far apart. And I care so much more about the isolated reader who feels the same way that I do than all the conformists who might be offended." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MISUNDERSTOOD

Misconception 1: He's anti-technology

"I don't think of myself as uninformed. Of course, I spend a minimum of two or three hours a day on the Internet in some fashion. It's just I don't know what it's like to be on Twitter. I don't need to know."

Misconception 2: He's focused on the family

"I'm a little confounded by how much I'm considered a family novelist. I find myself telling the story of Norman Mailer's reading part of The Corrections and writing to my editor that it seemed like a 'super-duper, hyped-up sitcom,' which had been my fear when I was working on it, that it would not be taken seriously. I think Mailer was wrong, of course. In pretty much all my novels, there's a lot more about the workplace. There are no intact families in the new novel."

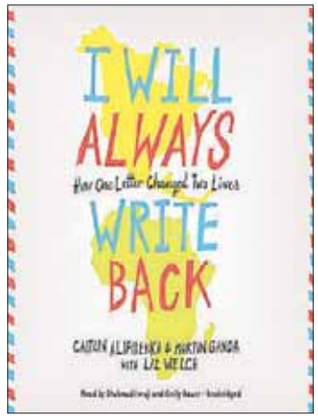
Misconception 3: His spring essay questioned climate change

"I was asking, does it really make sense for the entire environmental community to make climate change the overriding, almost exclusive priority for every organization? There was this blast of ad hominem rage. Nothing could have told me more clearly that I asked the right question — because they don't want to deal with the question on its merits." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

3 BOOKS TO RESTORE YOUR FAITH IN HUMANITY

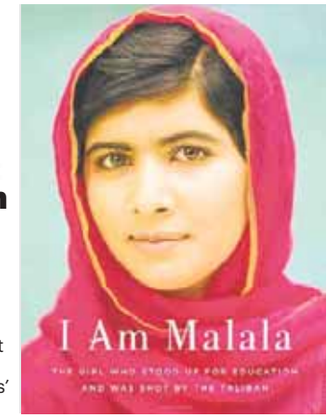
The world is mourning for Paris and Beirut. The lives of those lost in the terror attacks last week should be front of mind and honoured, not forgotten. But it's also important to remember the good in humanity. Keep following the news as it develops, but also, reach for one of these books to help remind yourself that people aren't all bad. **EMILY LAURENCE** METRO NEW YORK

1 I Will Always Write Back by Caitlin Alifirenka and Martin Ganda



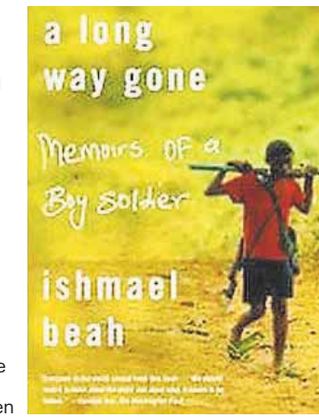
When American Caitlin Alifirenka was in the seventh grade, she started writing to a boy in Zimbabwe as part of a class project. The two kept corresponding long after the school year ended and developed a bond that would forever change the course of their lives. I Will Always Write Back shares those letters, along with details of just how different their situations were — Alifirenka growing up in the suburban town of Hatfield, Penn. and Martin Ganda in the slums of Mutare. This book serves as a reminder that a small act can have a huge, life-changing impact.

2 I am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban by Malala Yousafzai



If you still haven't read Malala Yousafzai's incredible memoir about standing up to the Taliban in support of girls' education in Pakistan, you should now — especially before watching the documentary based on her story, He Named Me Malala, which comes to DVD this December. Seeing how one ordinary girl's bravery sparked global change will encourage you to live more boldly as well.

3 A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier by Ishmael Beah



This true story about a child soldier in Sierra Leone will break your heart, but it will also remind you that human beings are resilient creatures.

Ishmael Beah tells the story of when rebels attacked his village when he was just 12 years old, forcing him and his brother to flee the violence, not knowing where they were going and wandering from village to village locked in a struggle for survival. At 13 years old, Beah became a child soldier, conscripted by the Revolutionary United Front. In his memoir he shares his inspiring story with the world.

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JOHANNA SCHNELLER WHAT I'M WATCHING

When The Good Wife goes bad

THE GOOD WIFE, SEASON 7, EPISODE 7 (NBC/GLOBAL)

Attorney Alicia Florrick (Julianna Margulies), who's just triumphed at work, and her husband Peter (Chris Noth), who's running for U.S. president, are sharing a drink in her kitchen. (They're estranged, but pretending to be together for his campaign.)

"Nothing beats a good cross-examination," she says, toasting herself. "I just got a million-dollar donation," he counters. They smile at each other like jackals. "Want to get laid?" she asks. "I have 20 minutes."

They repair to her spare room and unceremoniously strip. Cut to them getting dressed.

"That was sexy. Why is that?" Peter asks.

"Because sex is sexier without love," Alicia replies.

Hmm. Nothing announces The New Alicia quite like a zipless screw. A few seasons ago, it was her abiding love for the now-deceased Will Gardner (Josh Charles) that made their sex so hot. But that was then. All this season, we've been watching Alicia toughen.

Alicia evolves before our eyes on The Good Wife. HANDOUT

She traded red wine for tequila, and ditched her white-glove firm for a scrappy, public-defender partner (Cush Jumbo). Out went her crush on namby-pamby lawyer Finn Polmar (Matthew Goode); in came her wolfish stares at her new, dangerous-hunk investigator (Jeffrey Dean Morgan).

Alicia's character evolution makes sense plot-wise: Faking it for Peter's campaign is nervy enough. But if he wins, she's going to be a faux-First Lady — and that would take balls of steel.

The Good Wife has never feared changing things up; that's why it's enjoyed such a long, strong run. But turning Alicia into Lady Macbeth is a truly interesting twist.

SPOILER ALERT

The Big Bang Theory that many have waited for

The final Big Bang Theory episode to air before holidays will mark a turning page for some of their characters.

Unable to keep a lid on the new plot twist after show was taped in front of a live studio audience Tuesday night, CBS confirmed that after five seasons, Sheldon (played by Jim Parsons) and Amy (Mayim Bialik) finally consummated their relationship. "SAY WHAT?! #BigBangTheory EP Steve Molaro confirms coitus is in #Shamy's near future," reads a tweet blast from the show's official Twitter account.

AFP

KRYSTEN RITTER

Finding intimacy in playing a superhero

Krysten Ritter was never drawn to comics, but the opportunity to take on a character-driven role in the new Netflix series Marvel's Jessica Jones convinced her to find her inner superhero.

"Being able to have this role, it's like actor-candy," says the former "Don't Trust the B— in Apartment 23" star, who plays the titular character, an emotionally tortured, super-strong young woman working as a private detective in New York.

Premiering Friday, the new Marvel series also stars Doctor Who's David Tennant as villainous Kilgrave, while Mike Colter is fellow superhero Luke Cage, another character set to get his own Netflix series next year. Jones and Cage will join the characters from the already-streaming Marvel's Daredevil and upcoming Marvel's Iron Fist for the eventual combo, Marvel's The Defenders.

In advance of Jessica Jones's premiere, Ritter says she found surprisingly meaty role in the series, even though she knew little about this character or the Marvel universe beforehand.

"I am always drawn to smaller stories and intimate character dramas. Little did I know that when I started this whole process of auditioning and learning about this project that that's exactly what this is. This is a very rooted, grounded character study. And the fact that she's a superhero is kind of always second in my mind."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

INTERVIEW

Aramis Knight's M.K. has a dark secret on Into the Badlands

Aramis Knight is only 16 years old, but he's already something of a Hollywood veteran with plenty of titles like Ender's Game and The Dark Knight Rises behind him. But with AMC's new dystopian martial arts drama Into the Badlands, he had to pick up a whole new set of skills for the role of the mysterious young M.K.

How did you go about throwing yourself into this world?

There was a lot of preparation that went into this project. They put us through a seven-week martial arts training boot camp to put us into this world and get us in touch with the athletic side of ourselves. I think that seven-week boot camp definitely helped a lot. I don't think I realized it by the end of it, but once we began filming and we were doing martial arts every day and we really were asked to dive into this world, I realized how much it actually helped.

Was that level of physical training daunting?

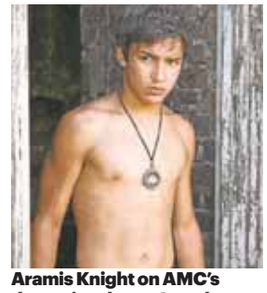
Yeah, definitely. I've been in this business for 11 years, so not too many things intimidate me anymore when it comes to working on new projects or auditioning. But with this project, I had no martial arts background at all. I've always been very athletic, though, and very in touch with the physical part of me and I've always been very good at transforming my body for a role, but never to this extent. It definitely was intimidating, definitely daunting, but by the end of the seven weeks I was feeling pretty good and doing things I never thought I'd be able to do.

Like what?

They had me doing back-flips, kicking over my head. I was touching my forehead to my knee when I was stretching. Things like that, that I never thought I'd be able to do because coming in I lacked flexibility a lot.

Since your character goes on something of a training journey, did that make it easier? Like you could be kind of bad early on?

It definitely lessened the pressure, yeah. But I knew I would be working so much that I would have to unleash everything I learned eventually. And also because of M.K.'s dark secret, you have to be able to see a change in his abilities. So I had to sort of figure out how to suppress my abilities but then also let them shine when I do go into that state that is so special. NED EHRBAR/FOR METRO



Aramis Knight on AMC's dystopian drama Into the Badlands. HANDOUT

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PEOPLE MAGAZINE

Becks is sexiest of them all

If you were doubting the exact sexiness level of David Beckham, doubt no more, for it has officially been quantified.

Beckham has been dubbed the Sexiest Man Alive for 2015 by People magazine.

The news was announced on Jimmy Kimmel Live, with Beckham appearing via Skype to accept the honour.

"I would obviously like to thank my parents for bringing me into this world, of course. I would like to thank my hairdresser, my stylist," he joked.

He was a bit more serious with the magazine itself: "I never feel that I'm an attractive, sexy person," Beckham tells People.

"I mean, I like to wear nice clothes and nice suits and look and feel good, but I don't ever think of myself that way." Which kind of sounds like super-modest B.S., but whatever.

NED EHRBAR/ METRO HOLLYWOOD

David Beckham

metroGOSSIP MUST READ

Gwen Stefani says having her heart broken has allowed her to write some really incredible music. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Stefani wishes split never happened

RELATIONSHIPS

Singer keeps opening up over divorce from Gavin Rossdale

Ned Ehrbar
Metro | Hollywood

Apparently Gwen Stefani talking to a radio station about her divorce is a weekly thing now, and this week she's getting much more candid. And get this: Stefani found inspiration to split up with husband Gavin Rossdale by … listening to her old No Doubt breakup songs.

"I go back and listen to a lot of that stuff and get sick," she tells Washington, D.C.'s 94.7 Fresh FM.

"You look at the song and go, 'that was a red flag and that was a moment where I was feeling just as bad as I do today and why did I keep it up?'"

As for the divorce itself? She's looking on the bright side.

"I wish it didn't happen. I wish that all this wasn't happening, but it was part of my life journey," she says.

"In my life I've had two really bad heartbreaks, but I've written some really incredible music out of it." See? She really is a big fan of her work.

CHARLIE SHEEN

Martin Sheen in awe of son's courage

The West Wing actor Martin Sheen says he wishes he had the courage of his son Charlie Sheen, who has revealed he's HIV-positive.

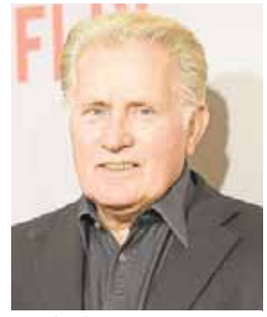
Sheen spoke Tuesday during an event at The Ritz-Carlton resort in Naples, Florida, hours after his son's appearance on NBC's Today.

According to the Naples Daily News, Sheen said his 50-year-old son had been working up to the announcement for months with his family's encouragement.

Sheen said that as he watched his son reveal "his deepest, darkest secret, I couldn't believe the level of courage I was witnessing, and that it was my son."

Sheen encouraged support for people struggling with drug and alcohol addictions.

He said he hoped the announcement was "the first day of the rest of Charlie's life as a free man." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Martin Sheen

GOSSIP BRIEFS

Adele doesn't sing about heartbreak, for once

Adele is the queen of heartbreak. When she released Hello a few weeks ago, it teased that her new album would continue her lonely-hearts song trend. But this week she dropped her new single, Water Under The Bridge, and it's about her being happy in love. Adele tells Beats 1 Radio that the song is about her waiting for boyfriend Simon Konecki to treat her badly. But it just didn't happen. "Water Under The Bridge is more like, I'm waiting for him to be horrible but I don't think he's gonna be, waiting for the relationship to end. This is the relationship now that I'm gonna be in. It was quite a ground-breaking moment," she says.

EMILY LAURENCE/METRO NEW YORK

Adele

Bieber gets assassinated in Zoolander 2

Canadian pop superstar Justin Bieber appears to meet a grim fate in the upcoming Zoolander 2 film. The comedy spoof features an assassin who's out to kill "the world's most beautiful people," and Bieber appears to be one of them. A newly released trailer for the film starring Ben Stiller and Owen Wilson shows Bieber being chased down by an assassin who's on a motorbike. In the next shot, Bieber is apparently injured on the ground, and uses his phone to take a selfie while flashing blue steel. Zoolander 2 is due out in February. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Your essential daily news

Living Light Sessions: Philips teams with musicians to showcase its Hue range of smart lights

Packing up your life and starting over doesn't have to be a daunting task. Websites and apps like Krrb and Fountain connect you with those who can help. ISTOCK

Home setup just a click away

TECHNOLOGY

These online resources take hassle out of moving, decor

In a connected world, nesting's a lot easier than it used to be. There are apps and websites that streamline many aspects of setting up and dismantling a home.

Whether you're trying to get rid of old stuff, buy new stuff, move stuff or find ways to use your stuff, chances are there's an app (or at least a website) for that.

Note: Some of the services are currently available only in the U.S.

Move it

There was a time when moving out of an old place and into a new one was a daunting logistical challenge, especially for the unorganized or inexperienced.

How do you find a reliable moving company? What do you need to know to prepare and execute a successful move?

Unpakt.com lets you compare more than 600 pre-screened, licensed, local or interstate moving firms, read credentials and reviews, and book online. Plug in the size of your home, the date you want to move, locations, and any additional needs like storage or extra drop-off stops. You can live-chat with an adviser. There's info and an app for setting up your moving timeline and making an inventory. (unpakt.com)

Move Advisor also helps with an inventory, and calculates how many boxes and furniture blankets you're likely to need, as well as estimating the requisite moving capacity of any truck you're thinking of renting for a DIY move. If you decide to go with pros, you can email your inventory directly to them. An online timeline tracks your to-do list. (moveadvisor.com)

Lose it

For those who want to sell off belongings with minimum inconvenience, Krrb (pronounced "curb") is a classifieds site designed for local and in-person commerce. The company's mission is to highlight "what's right next door, not a billion anonymous results," in order to save time, money and the need for packing, shipping and returns. Users can buy and sell second-hand items, local goods and more. You can join Krrb and set up your "corner shop" for free, but publishing a listing costs one "credit," which you can buy or earn by doing things like filling out a profile or reviewing the Krrb iPhone app. (krrb.com)

New York-based AptDeco.com was founded by Kalam Dennis and Reham Fagiri as an alternative to Craigslist after they learned that 10.8 million tons of furniture go to landfills each year. They hoped to make it easier to unload unwanted furnishings or find something new. Want to sell that old dresser you got from your uncle? AptDeco provides pricing advice, promotion, picks up the item, and handles the financial transaction. (aptdeco.com)

Decorate it

You could ask your style-savvy best friend for decorating advice, but wouldn't it be nice if a pro was available? Well, for a relatively small fee you can tap into an online brain trust of hundreds of design professionals.

West Elm offers free help with things like designing and measuring a floor plan, decorating, and choosing paint and fabrics. For a fee, they've got pros who can come help with everything from wall-mounting a TV to painting a room to hanging shelves, art and curtains. (westelm.com)

Home decor items curated by a stylist for U.S. clientele who join The Swatch Box. The batik pillow, below, is a popular item on the home styling site. THE SWATCH BOX VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Laurel & Wolf, a Los Angeles online interior design marketplace, connects people with interior designers. Upload some photos and answer questions about your space, budget, lifestyle and taste, and you'll receive "First Looks" from several interior designers. You review the ideas and select one designer with whom to work. They send you back a style board, furniture plan, instructions and shopping list.

Kimberly Valente, one of Laurel & Wolf's design partners, recently helped a Santa Monica couple who were moving in together and didn't like each other's stuff. They agreed they wanted a beachy, casual vibe. Valente suggested some kitchen backsplash and counter upgrades as well as new lighting, and a soothing palette of ocean blue and sand. (laurelandwolf.com)

The Fountain app connects you to interior decorators, handymen, gardening experts and tech folks. You can talk over your project by video-chat, and the experts can sketch out ideas on your posted images. (fountain.com)

If you're a member at The Swatch Box, you complete a style-preference survey and get matched with a stylist, who curates a quarterly collection of items for your space and sends them to you — throws, pillows, bedding and entertaining items, for instance. You keep what you want and send back the rest. (theswatchbox.com)

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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INKed in the East Village

Project overview

Blending downtown life with innovative living, INK by Battistella Developments offers an affordable alternative for those looking to live in one of Calgary's most flourishing communities. With pre-sales now on, these loft-style condos in the heart of the East Village are already more than 40 per cent sold out.

Building amenities

A rare price point in downtown Calgary, INK spaces are all modern and bright with a rooftop patio for residents to enjoy during warmer months. Do-it-yourselfers are also able to work on projects at home with INK's collaborative workspace, bike workshop and repair room.

Location and transit

Located right in the middle of the East Village, INK is only steps away from downtown LRT stations and a number of different bus routes. A short walk away from the city core, INK is also a perfect spot for commuters travelling by bike or on foot.

In the neighbourhood

One of the most sought-after areas to live in Calgary, INK residents hardly have to step out the door to explore the city's East Village. Right next to leisure spots like St. Patrick's Island and the beautifully revamped Simmons Building, INK is also midway between Calgary's bustling downtown scene and eclectic neighbourhoods like Inglewood.

ANNA BROOKS/FOR METRO

CONTRIBUTED

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

What: INK by Battistella
Builder: Battistella Developments
Developer: Battistella Developments
Community: East Village
Building: Loft-style condominiums
Sizes: From 368 sq. ft. to 689 sq. ft.
Pricing: Starting from the low $200,000s
Model: Studio, one- and two-bedroom floor plans
Status: Starting construction in 2016
Occupancy: Late 2018
Sales centre: #108 535 8 Ave. SE
Phone: 403-452-9268
Website: inkcondoseastvillage.ca

REAL ESTATE

Hot on the market

ANNA BROOKS/FOR METRO

1 EAST VILLAGE

Art showcase: Check out some amazing ACAD student art being shown at the INK show suite located at #108 535 8 Ave. SE. Battistella Developments also supports the arts through student funding, scholarships and anticipated studio space in the completed INK building. Sales centre and show suite hours: Mon.-Thurs., 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sat. and Sun., 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

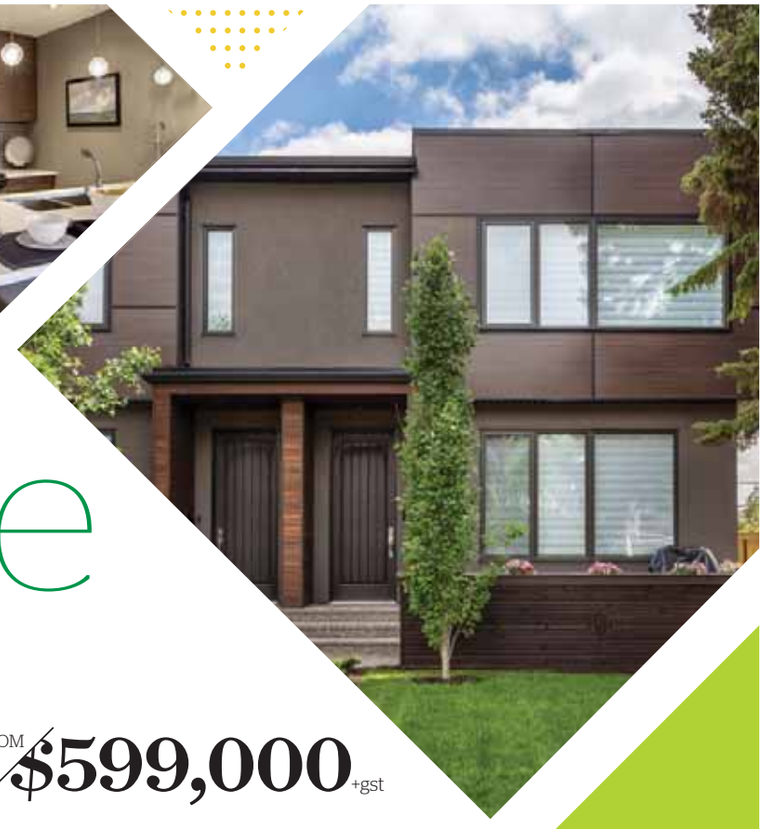
2 MOUNT ROYAL

Condo available: A luxury condo just opened up in Lower Mount Royal nestled just behind 17th Avenue. Book an appointment to visit this beautiful two-bedroom condo located at #203 929 18th Ave. SW. For more information call Calgary Lofts at 403-264-8086.

3 MISSION

Open house: Looking to live downtown? Visit an open house at Luna, the newest in a trio of urban condos by Qualex Landmark. Open houses will be held Nov. 21 and 22 from noon to 2 p.m. at #2401 1111 10 St. SW. Visit liveatluna.com for more information.

urbantowns
by sarinahomes



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METRO SPACES

Go green on the inside while it's cold outside

While snow may be on the ground, you can still look for ways to go green. Small changes around your home can have a big impact on others and the environment. TD Friends of the Environment Foundation shares five creative ways to be kind to the environment this winter.

Give old items a new life: If the weather outside is frightful, stay inside to clean out closets, storage areas and junk drawers. Instead of throwing unwanted items in the trash, look for ways to reuse or recycle. Donate usable clothes, cut up old t-shirts to use as rags and give old furniture new life with a fresh coat of low-VOC paint. Want to get creative? Consider making bookshelves from painted eavestroughs and turning old shutters into wall art.

Get cozy: Put that ugly holiday sweater to good use. Layer up to keep warm and lower the thermostat by a degree or two to save energy (and money).

Go DIY with home cleaning: With the windows shut tight, there is no better time to try homemade cleaning supplies. The best part is that many of the basic ingredients needed can often already be found at home, including baking soda, lemon juice and white vinegar.

Pass on the paper: Go digital when it comes to books, movies, music and magazines and send greeting cards and gift cards electronically to reduce waste.

Bring the outside in: Add a splash of green and improve the air quality inside your home with houseplants. Interested in tackling a larger project? Create a vertical garden that's filled with a variety of plants.

SHUTTERSTOCK

Don't forget to create an electronic to-do list and set up weekly or monthly reminders to keep your projects on track. *-News Canada*

Find your perfect floors

Quality is important, especially when it comes to flooring. That's why, whether you're renovating or building a new home from the ground up, finding the right flooring provider is critical, according to Sandy Sangster, owner of Calgary Flooring Designs, a provider of high-quality flooring options in Calgary.

Calgary Flooring Designs carries excellent quality custom flooring of all kinds, including hardwood, engineered hardwood, carpet, laminate, and tiles.

Walk into the store and you'll find one of the largest selections of flooring in the city, with a wide variety of brands and lots of selection for buyers who are looking to make their home perfect.

The Calgary Flooring Designs team welcome customers into a low-pressure atmosphere, where the top priority is to find the best flooring options to suit their unique needs.

Expert staff guide customers through every aspect of the purchasing process, from selection to costing, delivery and installation. The ultimate goal is to find the perfect floors for them.

"It's important that the design of your flooring not only match your tastes and the feel you're going for in the room you're creating, but also that the flooring suits the style of the home and the uses of the room. Our experts will help you find that balance so you can find a floor to last you a lifetime," says Sangster.

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ESTIMATES & MEASURES

Downtown living in the Beltline

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There's nothing like living downtown. In Calgary, that means having access to everything you could ever need. There's no time like the present to buy in this incredibly liveable city, according to Mohammed Esfahani, president of Qualex-Landmark™, the developer of Park Point, a new condo development located in the heart of Calgary's Beltline community.

"Considering the economic climate, we're pleased to see that the market has responded accordingly to our first-class residential offering within the heart of an amenity-rich downtown community," says Esfahani. "Now that we've broken ground, construction is in high gear to enable us to deliver to our homebuyers their dream home so they can start to enjoy downtown urban living at its best."

Park Point has sold $50 million worth of units to date and the groundbreaking indicates positive real estate activity in Calgary's residential condo sector, he notes. One major benefit is Park Point's sound investment in the Beltline community, with its heritage, amenities and incredible accessibility.

"We've always had faith in the Calgary real estate market, but we've been especially drawn to the Beltline community because it is a very established neighbourhood with every amenity and service imaginable within a short walk," says Esfahani. "Aside from being one of the most centralized real estate opportunities in the city, the exceptional, protected panoramic views of Calgary and Central Memorial Park makes Park Point a best of class location for investing in an active lifestyle in the rapidly evolving city centre."

Amenities will allow residents to access all the benefits they need, all within the comfort, safety and easy access of their own building. Residents will enjoy a variety of onsite amenities including a fitness facility, yoga/Pilates studio, steam room and sauna, social lounge club, 24-hour concierge and a furnished guest suite. Outdoors will have a Zen Terrace, lounge with fire pit, barbecue area and a yoga/Pilates deck.

"In addition to the fantastic amenities within the building, residents of Park Point will have every conceivable service and amenity at their fingertips, from grocery stores, fashion, cafes, gourmet dining, art galleries, parks and pathways to hair salons, medical services, transit, Car2Go and nearby Plus-15 skywalk. You've got it all," says Esfahani.

To learn more, visit the Discovery Centre at 301 11th Ave. S.W., open daily, noon-5 p.m., except closed Fridays, call 403-244-2428, or visit qualex.ca/parkpoint.

CONTRIBUTED

A quality choice for first-time homebuyers

First-time homebuyers looking to purchase their first home are increasingly looking to downtown Calgary as the right place to buy, right now. The perfect place? Park Point.

"The majority of homes are one bedroom, a proportion of which are being released without a parking stall, which contributes to making Park Point more within the financial reach of first-time homebuyers," says Parham Mahboubi, vice-president, Planning & Marketing. "We feel Park Point offers great value to singles, couples or retires seeking premium quality and carefree living, and a unique opportunity to invest in a great product."

Buyers in Park Point can choose from 28 floor plans with one-, two- and three-bedroom condos ranging from 502-2,018 sq. ft., and eight two-storey, two-bedroom street-level live-work townhomes ranging from 1,025-1,320 sq. ft. There are also larger sub-penthouses and penthouses available. Prices start from $267,000.

While homes at Park Point are available at an achievable price point, they're also beautifully designed, and completed with high-end finishes.

Park Point's interiors by renowned interior design firm, Trepp Design Inc. feature open concept living and a timeless design with expansive windows to maximize natural light. Suites are well-appointed with premium Italian Armony Cucine kitchens that include granite countertops and backsplash and German-engineered Liebherr and AEG appliances and bathrooms with elegant marble countertops and porcelain tile flooring. The building features a secured, underground parkade. The quality is apparent the moment you walk in the main entrance at Park Point. Designed by global architectural firm IBI Group, the development will present a sophisticated sculptural expression and contemporary style with an elegant double-height lobby. "Walking into your home at Park Point will be like entering into a luxury-level hotel," says Mahboubi. "The sense of grandeur and quality will be palpable."

QUALEX-LANDMARK BREAKS GROUND

When there's a challenging real estate market, a developer's reputation can make all the difference.

Park Point, a collection of condos in the heart of downtown Calgary, was constructed to exacting standards.

Nestled in the heart of Calgary's vibrant, amenity-rich and diverse Beltline community, "With over 120 homes sold so far, we are thrilled to begin construction on our sixth condo tower in Calgary," says Mohammed Esfahani, president, Qualex-Landmark™.

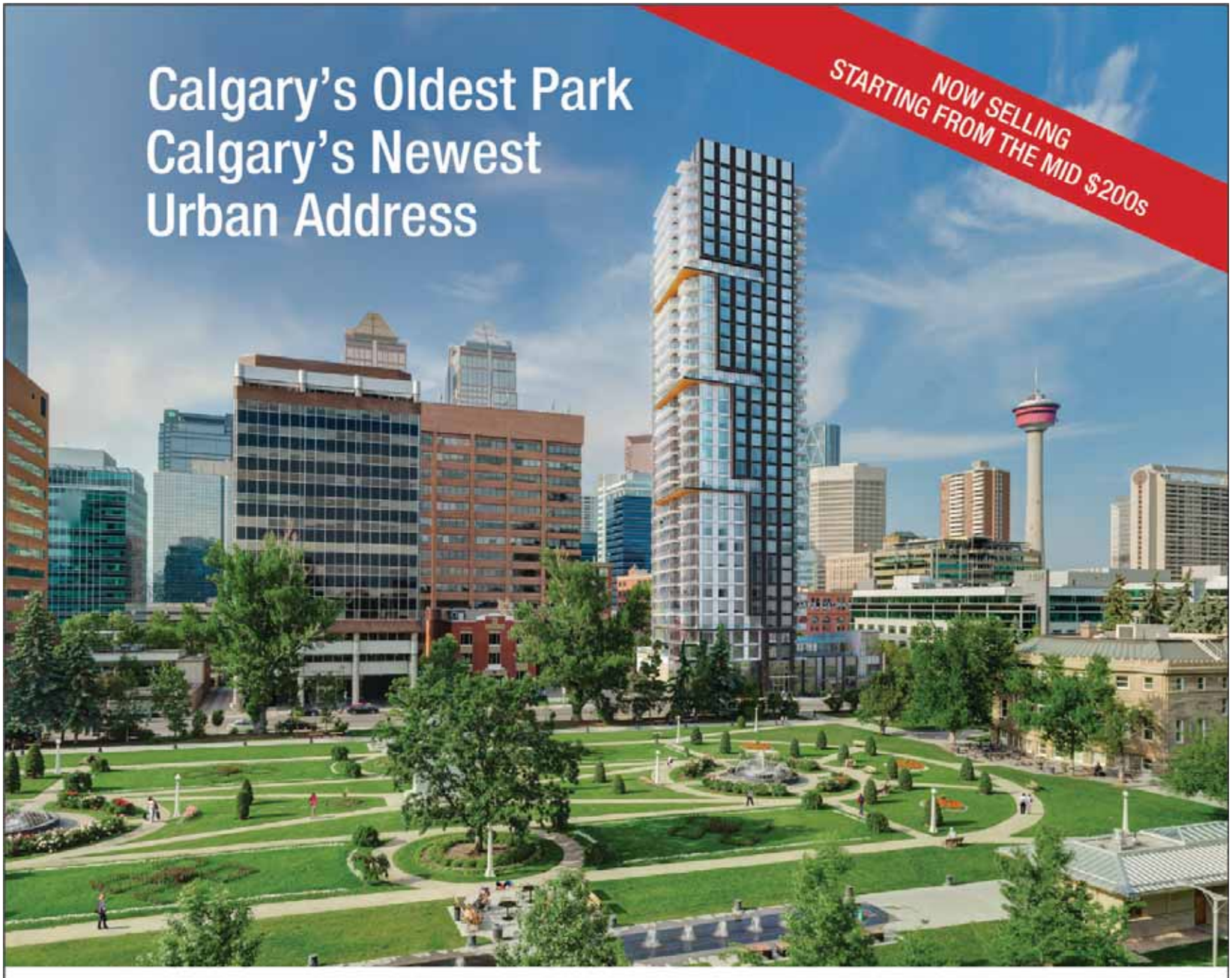
Condo buyers seeking an outstanding location, features and amenities have embraced Qualex-Landmark™ group's newest tower in Calgary averaging 17 home sales per month since its launch in March.

Qualex-Landmark™ broke ground on Oct. 16 to mark the start of construction of its 34-storey residential condo tower. Located on 12th Avenue and 2nd Street S.W. and facing onto historic Central Memorial Park, PARK POINT presents 289 homes — more than 40 per cent of which have already been sold.

Qualex-Landmark™ has always placed a high value on customer service.

"According to a recent third-party survey by Avid Survey, Park Point is well above the Canada wide average of 82 per cent with 94 per cent in Overall Home Buyer Satisfaction," says Jordan Beach, vice president of sales and service for Qualex-Landmark™.

CONTRIBUTED



PARK POINT

Own a new local landmark. Overlook the sparkling Calgary skyline from Park Point's unique setting and feel secure by investing in unobstructed views atop rare protected green space. At night, enjoy starlight from your iconic urban tower. By day, soak in the natural sunlight and blue skies while contemplating the gardens and places to venture to below.

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Get your house winter-ready

Cold-weather season is setting in and homeowners are getting ready for winter. If you've just bought your first place, there are a few things you need to know about making sure it's ready for winter, so you and your family stay warm and your home stays well-maintained.

There are a few key things homeowners can do to maintain their homes, says Mike Renaud, store manager of The Home Depot Canada, Calgary Southeast store.

Maintain your roof

"A well-maintained roof keeps the warm air in and cold air out," explains Renaud. "Being proactive now, with repairs and maintenance, will prevent larger issues in the spring months."

Small leaks can cause major problems. Even if the leaks aren't bothering you directly right now, fixing them now can prevent mold, rotted framing and other water damage that can be a major expense down the line.

Remember to check and examine if there are any leaks, ventilation issues, or insulation deficiencies.

Install door sweeps

This simple, inexpensive fix will help you save around 20 per cent on heating and cooling bills by preventing air from leaking in and out through the cracks under your door.

Air leaks through the bottom of doors are common in older homes. "A door sweep is easy to install with a few simple screws," says Renaud.

Prep drains for winter

Get your home ready for when the snow on your roof melts in spring and causes major runoff. Add a downspout extension to your current drainage system.

"Come spring, melting snow should be directed at least three to four feet away from your home's foundation," says Renaud.

Also make sure your exterior faucets have been turned off to avoid burst pipes.

SHUTTERSTOCK

Dust your home ventilation

This is a simple way to lower your heating bills and keep your ventilation system maintained.

"Now is the time to thoroughly clean heating ducts, grills, registers and ceiling fans," Renaud says. "Air filters should be replaced as least once every three months as they can become clogged, causing your system to work less efficiently and increasing operating costs."

-Stephanie Orford

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Get out of the rental rut with Attainable

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Since its inception five years ago, the driving goal behind City-backed Attainable Homes has remained the same: help middle-income Calgarians out of the rental rut by providing gifted down payments, and by selling high-quality homes at below average prices.

While the mandate of this progressive non-profit group has never changed, the economic climate certainly has.

Sliding oil prices, shifting political winds and predictions of an interest rate increase have left many people gun-shy about making major investments — and a home is about as major as it gets. However, this dark cloud may hold a silver lining for renters who are contemplating their first rung on the real estate ladder.

"A big reason our program has been so successful with new home buyers over the past several years can be attributed in part to exceptionally low interest rates," says Tara Cooney, Attainable Homes sales and marketing manager. "With rising interest rates on the horizon, and with an economy that keeps shrinking, we're trying to get the word out that right now is the time to take advantage of our Attainable Home Ownership Plan. We're telling people to get on board, get the interest rate locked in, and start paying your own mortgage instead of your landlord's."

Cooney warns that a hike in the lending rate will almost certainly mean an increase in rental prices in the not-too-distant future. A mortgage, she argues, can lock an interest rate for up to five years. This can spell greater long-term security and less exposure to the present economic headwinds.

In addition to making economic sense, these homes are also designed with quality of life in mind.

"We have an amazing new condo called Varsity 4818," Cooney says. "With five great schools within walking distance, Market Mall down the block and the university just a bike ride away, this is a beautiful design in an exceptionally nice location. These homes just came on the market, and with our help they can be owned for less than the cost of an average Calgary rental unit."

Attainable Homes has a variety of ownership opportunities across Calgary, from existing homes for sale to condo projects under development. Hopeful homeowners can get a glimpse of current inventory at the Attainable Homes Sales Center at 1010 – 6th Ave. SW, or by visiting AttainYourHome.com.

In addition to showcasing all current home listings, the Attainable Homes website also has an ownership toolkit section that allows customers to register for the program and qualify for a gifted down payment.

ONE-COLUMN

City-owned Attainable Homes connects moderate-income Calgarians with amazing ownership opportunities like its new one and two bedroom condos at Varsity 4818. From granite countertops, designer colour palettes and custom high-end extras to a coveted spot in Calgary's character-rich community of Varsity, these new condos are ideal for any renters looking for a home of their very own. Reserve yours today at AttainYourHome.com and lock in your interest rate while it's still low.

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Nothing feels as good as walking through the door of your very own home for the first time. We can make this happen with a brand new condominium in the heart of Varsity. We'll even throw in the down payment if you qualify.
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The Houston Rockets fired head coach Kevin McHale after the team started the season 4-7

Rested Eskimos 'ready physically and mentally'

CFL PLAYOFFS

Matchup with archrival comes after 21-day break

The Edmonton Eskimos are confident that a three-week layoff will work in their favour as they prepare to host the Calgary Stampeders in Sundays CFL West final.

Teams finishing first in the West and being off the semi-final week have just a 5-5 record over the past 10 division finals.

But the Eskimos, who finished first in the CFL West at 14-4, had a bye the final week of the regular season as well so they won't have played for 21 days, the second-longest layoff in the division's history.

The positive there is that teams with layoffs of 16 days or more since 1959 are 7-1 in the West final.

"That's pretty good," Edmonton centre Julian Sorensen said. "Let's keep the trend going."

Doing that, however, won't be easy against the defending Grey Cup champions, who rolled past the B.C. Lions in last week's semifinal.

Both teams are evenly matched and have very similar statistics offensively and defensively. Eskimos head coach Chris Jones smiled when he said it would be "a fun game Sunday."

Mike Reilly, right, and the Eskimos ran away with a 15-11 win over the Stampeders on Oct. 10 to claim the season series 2-1. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

"We have a good run game and so do they. We have good quarterbacks, so do they. They have a good receiving corps and so do we."

Everything, he said, points towards a tight, hard-hitting final.

"You have two great defences … so points could be scarce."

The difference in the season was Edmonton beat Calgary, also 14-4, two of three games to claim first place.

"It was huge winning back-to-back against them," said Sorensen. "And let's face it, if we didn't we would have played last week so it was huge for the organization and as a team. Plus it gives you confidence, winning two in a row against Calgary."

And the Eskimos believe the layoff will be more beneficial then detrimental, giving them time to rest, heal any nagging minor injuries and get their minds refocused.

Quarterback Mike Reilly said it was an ideal scenario for the Eskimos because they have a lot of veterans and Jones runs intense practices.

> **You have two great defences … so points could be scarce.**
> Chris Jones

"It was a good break for us — something that we needed," said Reilly.

Defensive end O'Dell Willis is one of those veterans and he agreed the long break — including 10 days away from the practice field — was a huge benefit.

He said playing 17 straight weeks was tough mentally and physically but after the break "my body is well rested … we're ready physically and mentally."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

STAMPEDERS

Tsoumpas out of retirement to help O-line

Offensive lineman Dimitri Tsoumpas has come out of retirement to provide an extra body at Calgary Stampeders practice.

The three-time CFL all-star retired in 2013 after six seasons with Calgary because of concussion symptoms.

Dimitri Tsoumpas GETTY IMAGES FILE

"Dimitri approached me and offered to help the team by going on the practice roster and taking some of the burden off our healthy offensive linemen at practice," Stampeders head coach and general manager John Hufnagel said Wednesday in a statement.

The Stampeders lost centre Pierre Lavertu and left guard Shane Bergman to injury in the first half of Sunday's win over the B.C. Lions in the division semi-final.

Tsoumpas, from Edmonton, coached the University of Calgary's offensive line in 2015.

The Stampeders also added 28-year-old offensive lineman Gord Hinse to the practice roster. The University of Alberta product from Edmonton has played 52 career CFL games with the Eskimos and Winnipeg Blue Bombers.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

D-line issues leave Ticats clawing to cover Burris

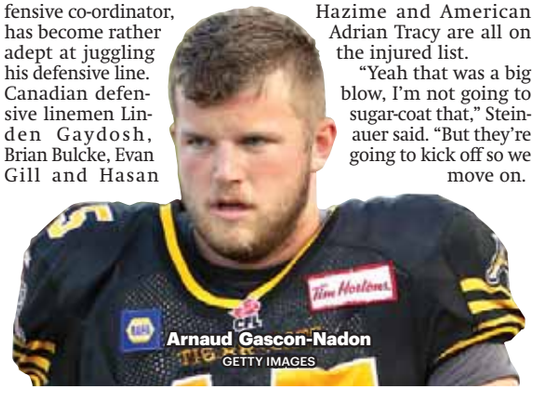
Once again, Orlondo Steinauer has some shuffling to do.

Defensive end Eric Norwood is doubtful Sunday when the Hamilton Tiger-Cats visit the Ottawa Redblacks in the East Division final. Norwood reportedly suffered a season-ending knee injury in last weekend's 25-22 home win over the Toronto Argonauts in the conference semifinal.

The loss of Norwood is huge for Hamilton. The six-foot-one, 252-pound lineman had seven sacks, one interception and two fumble returns for TDs this season.

But Steinauer, Hamilton's defensive co-ordinator, has become rather adept at juggling his defensive line. Canadian defensive linemen Linden Gaydosh, Brian Bulcke, Evan Gill and Hasan Hazime and American Adrian Tracy are all on the injured list.

"Yeah that was a big blow, I'm not going to sugar-coat that," Steinauer said. "But they're going to kick off so we move on.



Arnaud Gascon-Nadon GETTY IMAGES

"We'll put a different lineup out there but it won't affect our hearts and how hard we play."

With Norwood sidelined, sophomore Arnaud Gascon-Nadon, a Montreal native, is expected to start against Ottawa. Steinauer wouldn't confirm that but defensive tackle Ted Laurent said the former Laval star has the confidence of his teammates.

"We (defensive line) have been though a lot," said the burly Laurent, also a Montreal native and Hamilton's top Canadian award nominee the last two years. "Wood is down but Gascon-Nadon is going to step up and I believe will get the job done."

The Ticats also have Michael Atkinson, a six-foot, 312-pound native of Windsor, Ont., in his third CFL season with Hamilton.

Hamilton's defence faces a stiff challenge trying to contain a high-powered Ottawa offence led by quarterback Henry Burris. The 40-year-old is a finalist for the CFL's outstanding player award after registering a league-record 481 completions, league-high 5,703 yards and a career-best 70.9 completion percentage.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Henry Burris anchors the CFL's top aerial attack (322.6 yards per game).
TODD KOROL/GETTY IMAGES

Dallas Keuchel was the only pitcher to reach 20 wins in the American League this past season. RALPH FRESO/GETTY IMAGES

Keuchel and Arrieta awarded Cys

MLB

Price, Greinke place second in voting

Houston Astros lefty Dallas Keuchel beat out Toronto Blue Jays ace David Price for the AL Cy Young Award on Wednesday, while Jake Arrieta of the Chicago Cubs topped Dodgers stars Zack Greinke and Clayton Kershaw for the NL honour.

Keuchel got 22 first-place votes from the Baseball Writers' Association of America for 186 points. David Price drew eight first-place votes and 143 points for his split season with Detroit and Toronto and Oakland's Sonny Gray finished third.

Keuchel led the AL in wins, going 20-8 and helping Houston reach the playoffs for the first time since 2005. The bearded 27-year-old with a dominant sinker and sharp slider had a 2.48 ERA and 216 strikeouts.

Price, who was traded from Detroit to Toronto late in July, went 18-5 with a 2.45 ERA and 225 strikeouts.

In what was expected to be a tighter three-person race, Arrieta got 17 first-place votes for 169 points. Greinke drew 10 first-place votes and had 147 points. Kershaw had the other three firsts and 101 points.

Jake Arrieta GETTY IMAGES

Arrieta led the majors in wins, going 22-6. He went 11-0 in his last 12 starts, pushing the Cubs into the playoffs for the first time since 2008. The 29-year-old righty had a 1.77 ERA, struck out 236 and pitched a no-hitter. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CURLING

Controversial brooms swept aside

The World Curling Federation has extended a ban on controversial broom heads to all events for the 2015-16 season.

Olympic gold medallists Brad Jacobs, Brad Gushue, Jennifer Jones and former world champion Glenn Howard were among 50 Canadian and international teams who signed a statement released Oct. 14, saying their teams will not sweep with broom heads that have "directional fabric."

Coarse material on the broom heads creates a sandpaper effect on the ice and with it, sweepers have been able to manipulate the rock's trajectory in ways they never could before.

> **The primary objective of this moratorium is to ensure a fair and level playing field.**
> WCF statement

Fearing that throwing accuracy and athleticism would be diminished, the curlers said they want to protect "the integrity of the game" in refusing to use the brush heads. THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Jays' Travis out for up to 20 weeks after surgery

Blue Jays second baseman Devon Travis has had surgery on his left shoulder and will be out 16 to 20 weeks.

The Jays said in a release that Travis had successful surgery Tuesday to treat a condition known as an os acromiale. The procedure included inserting screws to stabilize the extra bone in his shoulder. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nadal on upward trend beating frustrated Murray

Rafael Nadal won his second straight match at the ATP finals, beating Andy Murray 6-4, 6-1 Wednesday to close in on a spot in the semifinals of the season-ending tournament.

Nadal has been having one of the worst years of his career with 19 losses so far, but his game has improved since the U.S. Open, when he lost in the third round.

The second-seeded Murray was having his own problems at the O2 Arena on Wednesday, struggling with both his serve and his hair.

During one changeover in the first set, Murray pulled out a pair of scissors and gave himself a little trim.

It didn't help too much, though. Nadal broke Murray to end the first set, and then again early in the second to take control. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pacers have little trouble with hapless 76ers

Paul George scored 34 points and C.J. Miles added 20 to lead the Indiana Pacers to a 112-85 rout of the winless Philadelphia 76ers on Wednesday night.

T.J. McConnell scored 16 points for Philadelphia, which dropped to 0-12 while setting a season high with 31 turnovers. It was the 76ers' 22nd loss in a row dating to last season. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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'10 Ram 1500 ST $21,800 / $154 Bi-Weekly STOCK #686-5 (587) 352-7307
'15 Hyundai Elantra SE $16,800 / $118 Bi-Weekly STOCK #738-4 (403) 454-5794
'14 Ford Escape SE $23,800 / $168 Bi-Weekly STOCK #1285-3 (403) 457-2244
'14 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 2WT $34,800 / $246 Bi-Weekly STOCK #689-5 (587) 352-7307
'13 Toyota Camry LE $17,800 / $125 Bi-Weekly STOCK #1294-3 (403) 457-2244
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NHL

Three magic number for new all-star game

Anyone watching the NHL all-star game in recent years knew it was broken, so the league and players are trying something different to fix it.

A three-on-three tournament featuring teams from the four divisions will replace the traditional game at the 2016 NHL all-star weekend in Nashville in late January. The official announcement of the new format is coming Wednesday night.

The change, which required approval from players, drew positive reviews around the league based largely on how unpopular the old format was.

Leafs Players' Association representative Daniel Winnik said: "I think this'll bring more excitement with the three-on-three."

$1M
Amount winning team of all-star game receives

All-star teams from the Atlantic and Metropolitan Divisions and the Central and Pacific Divisions will play 20 minutes of three-on-three with the Eastern and Western Conference champions facing off after.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Olmstead dead at 89

Bert Olmstead, a Hall-of-Fame playmaker who won five Stanley Cups, has died at the age of 89.

Olmstead died Monday in Alberta. A tough winger, he played 848 games for the Montreal Canadiens, Chicago Blackhawks and Toronto Maple Leafs between 1948 and 1962. He won four Cups with Montreal (1953 and 1956 to 1958) and a fifth with Toronto in 1962.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Ailing Jets soothed by home comforts

NHL

Six-game skid ends in first of three straight at MTS Centre

The Jets' Mathieu Perreault stickhandles against Canucks defenders Derek Dorsett, left, and Luca Sbisa in front of goaltender Ryan Miller on Wednesday night. JOHN WOODS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mark Scheifele and Drew Stafford both scored twice as the Winnipeg Jets halted a six-game losing skid with a 4-1 victory over the Vancouver Canucks on Wednesday.

Stafford's first goal in 12 games helped break a 1-1 tie late in the second period. He scored again with 1:34 left in the game and also picked up an assist.

Scheifele also had a three-point night when he assisted on Stafford's last goal, while Mathieu Perrault had three assists.

Ondrej Pavelec made 29 saves for Winnipeg (9-9-2).

Ryan Miller stopped 30 of the 33 shots he faced for the Canucks (7-7-6), who lost their fourth game in a row in the final game of the team's season-long, seven-game road trip.

Daniel Sedin scored on the power play for Vancouver.

The victory was Winnipeg's first of a three-game homestand.

Scheifele got the best kind of retaliation with his sixth goal of the season at 5:55 of the first period.

The power-play goal came just over a minute after Jets rookie winger Nikolaj Ehlers headed to the dressing room after an illegal hit to the head by Luca Sbisa.

It was only the fifth time this season Winnipeg has scored the first goal in a game. Ehlers returned to action later in the period.

Tempers flared in the first, including all skaters pairing up for some punching and shoving in front of Winnipeg's net.

Sedin tied the game 1-1 at 6:44 of the second after Alexandre Burrows lost the puck and Sedin picked it up in front of the Jets' net and put it past Pavelec.

WEDNESDAY In Winnipeg

JETS	CANUCKS
4	1

It was Sedin's seventh goal of the season and 899th career point.

Stafford got the go-ahead goal at 17:29 of the second when he got his own rebound and flipped a backhand over Miller for his sixth of the season.

Scheifele scored his second of the game at 17:15 with a rebound and Stafford finished it off with 1:34 left in the third.

The Jets are home to Arizona on Saturday, while the Canucks host Chicago the same night.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Kuznetsov helps Capitals clip Red Wings

Evgeny Kuznetsov scored 45 seconds into overtime to lift the Washington Capitals to a 2-1 victory over the Detroit Red Wings on Wednesday night.

Alex Ovechkin was held without a goal for the fourth straight game and remained tied with Sergei Fedorov for the NHL's career lead among Russian players. Justin Williams scored for the Caps on a first-period power play after Dylan Larkin had opened the scoring for Detroit.

Braden Holtby had 25 saves for Washington, including two stops on clean breakaways during regulation. Kuznetsov won it with his sixth goal of the season, skating in on Petr Mrazek from the right wing and beating the Detroit goalie to the far post.

WEDNESDAY in Detroit

CAPITALS	RED WINGS
2	1

Ovechkin had a chance to break his tie with Fedorov in Detroit last week as well. Fedorov was at that game.

Ovechkin put 15 shots on goal that night but couldn't solve Mrazek in a 1-0 loss to the Red Wings. The Washington star had five shots in the first period Wednesday, but Detroit kept him contained pretty well after that.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Capitals' Justin Williams scores on Red Wings goalie Petr Mrazek in the first period. PAUL SANCYA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RECIPE One-Pot Chicken Cacciatore

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

This updated hunter's stew smells and tastes like it's been bubbling away on the stove for hours but only takes half an hour.

Ready in
Prep time: 30 minutes
Serves 4

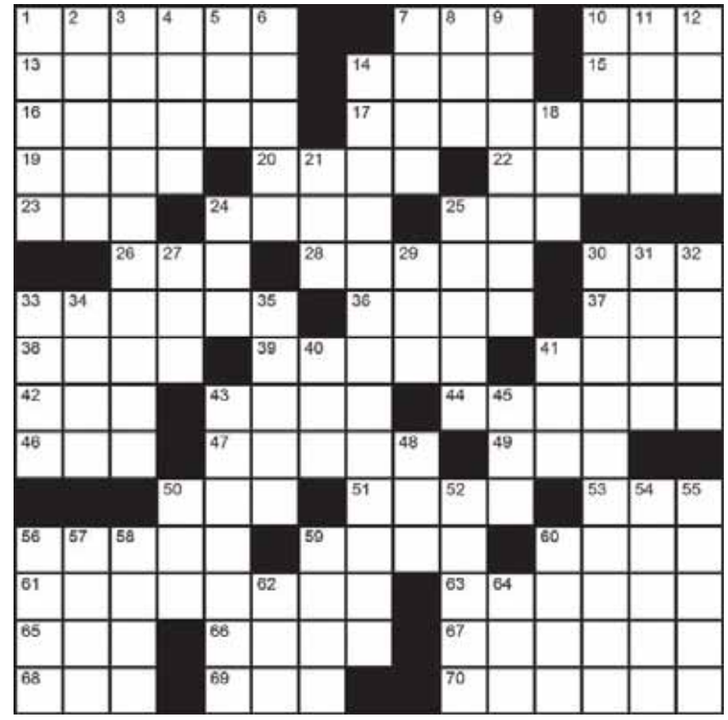
Ingredients
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 4 boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- Salt and pepper
- 1 lb mushrooms, cleaned, trimmed and sliced
- 3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp rosemary, minced
- 1 x 19 oz canned whole tomatoes
- 1 x 15 oz canned cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions
1. Pour oil into a large Dutch oven or pot over medium heat. Slice the chicken thighs into about four pieces each and season them with a good pinch of salt and pepper. Working in batches, brown the meat. Don't worry about cooking it through. When the meat is brown, set it aside on a clean plate, drain off all but 2 Tbsp of fat.
2. Reduce heat slightly and toss in mushrooms. Once they've cooked down, about three minutes, add the garlic and rosemary and sauté for another minute.
3. Now add your tomatoes and beans. Use the back of a wooden spoon to break up the tomatoes. Add the cooked chicken pieces and allow everything to simmer for about 15 or 20 minutes. Taste to check seasoning and add salt and pepper to taste.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. As per #43-Down... Reward for those amongst us who got neither #3-Down, Gold, Silver nor Bronze: 2 wds.
7. Brit-style mother
10. Utah's capital [acronym]
13. Wife of Alexander the Great
14. Throw __ loop
15. Optima car maker
16. Chicago or L.A., e.g.: 2 wds.
17. Standing __ (One of the tests in #43-Down)
19. 'Game' suffix
20. Garden of __
22. "_ __ Touch This" by MC Hammer
23. Mr. Mineo
24. _. _ (British glam band)
25. Chart-topper
26. Ms. Thompson
28. Bee Gees' "Night __"
30. "Murder, __ Wrote"
33. Boll __ (Type of beetle)
36. __ of reality
37. Perfect rating
38. Ms. Hathaway
39. Singer, Faith __
41. Desert's weather
42. 700 to Caesar
43. Impartial
44. Cowboy flicks
46. "Aaaii-_!!" (Cartoon shriek)
47. "_ __, I saw, I conquered." = "Veni, vidi, vici." (Julius Caesar's boast)
49. Bitty
50. Utmost, numbers-wise
51. Pull along
53. Trail
56. French __ soup
59. Ancient region of Europe
60. Identical
61. Joined up: 2 wds.
63. Three-horsed Russian carriage
65. Luanda is its cap.
66. Smelting waste
67. Apple variety
68. "Awesome!"
69. Rest in a recliner
70. Parthenon's place

DOWN
1. Architectural framework
2. Landscape garden plant
3. Top badge in the program at #43-Down, Award of __
4. Match
5. Chg. card percentage
6. Negative response giver, say
7. Satellite
8. Large vase
9. "Jerry __" (1996)
10. Gull-like bird
11. Outline
12. Hook or Cook's li'l title
14. Another of the tests in #43-Down: 3 wds.
18. Railway crossing [abbr.]
21. __ Leppard
24. Cocktail, Mai __
25. "__ __ Fine" by The Chiffons
27. Lady at #20-Across
29. Maria Trapp connector
30. Savvy, like an urbanite
31. __ to the throne
32. Remnants
33. Walk in shallow water
34. 'Refer' suffix
35. "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous" host Robin
40. By
41. 'Deterior' suffix
43. Canada __ Award (Program for students of the 1970s and 1980s testing speed, strength, endurance and agility)
45. Cobbler's tool
48. Perrier, par exemple
50. Oui's opposite
52. Prefix to 'violet'
54. Singer, Clay __
55. Irksome insects
56. "_! __..." (American anthem opener)
57. Songstress Ms. Simone
58. Mr. Pop of punk
59. Rocky Mountains animal
60. "Nonsense!"
62. Gladiator's 551
64. Boring routine

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
You may sympathize with a friend's problems but it is not your job to fix them. Sometimes it's better to let others find their own way — this is one of those times. Only step in if things really start to get bad.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
It would be nice if you liked everyone and never got angry but you are not that kind of person, so if someone gets under your skin make a point of avoiding them.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
It may seem as if you do not deserve the good things coming your way but it isn't true. That's why certain people are upset: deep down they know you are better than they are.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You are not a trivial person so don't do or say trivial things. It may be tempting but why lower yourself? You don't need to come down to someone else's level to make a point: their own negative attitude is punishment enough.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Let others know what you're worth. Your talents do not come cheap. Some may say your price is too high but they still require your services.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
The more you push yourself the less you are likely to achieve, so give yourself some breathing space. There are times it is hard to make an impression and this is one of them.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Do something on the spur of the moment today — it will be fun. Everyone may not approve but you enjoy being different.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Try not to get too emotional about something that you would usually dismiss. Also, don't be afraid to cut your losses if they are getting too big: the longer you hang on the bigger they are likely to get.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Let off some steam and don't worry if others object. They have only themselves to blame for leading you on and believing they could get away with it. You are not the type to let bad deeds go unpunished.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Try not to take anything too seriously today. You are dealing with forces that are too big to control or change. Accept your current situation for what it is and go with the flow.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
If you let your feelings get the better of you today it will cause more than a few problems further down the line. Aim to put logic ahead of emotion.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
The grass may look greener on the other side of the fence but you are advised not to make changes just yet. Wait until the Sun changes signs on the 22nd before making your move — you may find that you don't have to after all.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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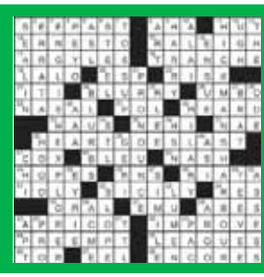

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